

Weekly Compilation of  
**Presidential  
Documents**



Monday, November 17, 2003  
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**Editor's Note:** The President was at Camp David, MD, on November 14, the closing date of this issue. Releases and announcements issued by the Office of the Press Secretary but not received in time for inclusion in this issue will be printed next week.

## WEEKLY COMPILATION OF

## PRESIDENTIAL DOCUMENTS

Published every Monday by the Office of the Federal Register, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, DC 20408, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents* contains statements, messages, and other Presidential materials released by the White House during the preceding week.

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Week Ending Friday, November 14, 2003

**Statement on House of  
Representatives Action on the  
Defense Authorization Conference  
Report**

*November 7, 2003*

I commend the House for passing the Defense Authorization conference report and showing strong bipartisan support for America's national security, our troops, and their families. This bill includes my request for a third straight pay raise, more resources for equipment and training, and quality of life improvements so that our military continues to be the finest fighting force in the world.

The legislation also makes good progress toward transforming and modernizing our military so that it is best prepared to protect Americans.

Finally, I am pleased that the House has resolved the issue of concurrent receipt for military retirees in a fair and responsible manner.

NOTE: This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

**Proclamation 7731—National  
Adoption Month, 2003**

*November 7, 2003*

*By the President of the United States  
of America*

**A Proclamation**

Every year, tens of thousands of American families answer the call to adopt a child. During National Adoption Month, we recognize America's adoptive and foster families. We also commit to helping all of our children, including those waiting in foster care, find safe, permanent, and loving homes.

On November 22, communities across the country will come together to celebrate National Adoption Day by finalizing the adoptions of over 3,000 children from foster care.

On this day and all this month, we honor families that have opened their hearts and homes to a child.

The number of children who are adopted has increased in recent years. Still, thousands of children in our country—many with special needs—continue to wait in foster care for an adoptive family.

We are taking important steps to make adoption more commonplace and to protect the well-being of our children. We have eased the financial burden of adoption by nearly doubling the maximum adoption tax credit. We expanded the Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program, which encourages adoption at the local level and supports adoptive families with services that ease a child's transition into a new family and help to strengthen the family. The Department of Health and Human Services provides incentives to States that increase the number of children adopted from State-supervised foster care.

Last year, my Administration launched the first Federal adoption website, [www.AdoptUSKids.org](http://www.AdoptUSKids.org), which features pictures and profiles of children available for adoption. This site helps loving families connect with waiting children across the country. Already, more than 1,700 children featured on the site have been placed with adoptive families. This progress is testimony to the selfless spirit of American families.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2003 as National Adoption Month. I call on all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities to honor adoptive families and to participate in efforts to find permanent homes for waiting children.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and

of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 12, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 13. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

### **Proclamation 7732—World Freedom Day, 2003**

*November 7, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

Fourteen years ago, freedom-loving people tore down the Berlin Wall and began to set a nation free from Communist oppression. On World Freedom Day, the United States joins with other countries in commemorating that historic day. The United States is committed to liberty, freedom, and the universal struggle for human rights. We strive to advance peace and democracy and to safeguard these ideals around the world.

After dividing families, friends, and communities for 28 years, the dismantling of the Berlin Wall reunited Germany and helped spread freedom across Central and Eastern Europe. With free elections and the spread of democratic values, these countries won their liberty, and their people became free. These democracies today contribute to a strong Europe, and the United States values their friendship and their partnership.

On World Freedom Day, Americans express gratitude for our freedom and dedicate ourselves to upholding the ideals of democracy. Today, we are working with other nations to bring freedom to people around the world. American and coalition forces are sacrificing to bring peace, security, and liberty to Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere. This is a mission for all who believe in democracy, tolerance, and freedom.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by

the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 9, 2003, as World Freedom Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities and to affirm their dedication to freedom and democracy for all.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 12, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 8, and it was published in the *Federal Register* on November 13.

### **The President's Radio Address**

*November 8, 2003*

Good morning. This week, we heard some good news about the effects of tax relief on the American economy. The Department of Labor reported that our economy added 126,000 new jobs in October. And over the past 3 months, there were 286,000 new jobs. The unemployment rate fell to 6 percent. The 4-week average for jobless claims has declined in 6 of the past 7 weeks, and manufacturers reported that orders and shipments are both rising.

This news comes one week after we heard that economic output rose at a 7.2 percent annual rate in the third quarter, the fastest pace of growth in nearly 20 years. America's economy is getting stronger every day. American companies are investing. Americans are buying homes at a record pace, and homeownership is near record levels. Stock market values have risen, adding about \$2 trillion in wealth for investors since the beginning of the year.

We can all be encouraged, but we cannot be satisfied. These are early signs of progress. Now we must turn this progress into broad and lasting gains for all Americans. Our improving economy is also a changing economy,

and some workers need help preparing for new jobs and new industries.

In Winston-Salem, North Carolina, where I traveled this week, manufacturing jobs have been declining for decades. The textile industry and furniture makers and farmers are hurting. In Winston-Salem, I also saw a good program at a community college that is training unemployed workers for new jobs in industries which are growing, such as biotechnology. Local businesses, along with the Department of Labor, are supporting this job training program. We must give more workers the opportunity to learn new skills so they can get ahead and provide for their families.

My administration is investing more than \$15 billion each year in job training and employment services. Americans can go to more than 1,900 one-stop career centers around the country, where, in a single location, they can check job listings, get help with a job application, and sign up for job training programs.

We're also helping more students attend community colleges, where so many people find new skills. We boosted our request for Pell grants, which help adults of all ages pay for college, by 45 percent since I took office. And I've asked Congress to establish personal reemployment accounts for out-of-work Americans to help them in their job search. These accounts would give up to \$3,000 to unemployed workers to get training, to find child care, or to relocate to a city where there is a job.

The most important thing we can do to help those looking for work is to make sure our current economic growth results in more new jobs. I have proposed a six-point economic plan to encourage companies to expand and hire workers. We must bring health care costs under control, reform our civil courts to end the junk lawsuits hurting small businesses, cut needless regulations so that small-business owners can focus on pleasing their customers instead of pleasing bureaucrats. We must pass a national energy policy to ensure an affordable and reliable supply of energy to our economy, promote free trade agreements that bring good jobs to America, and make tax relief permanent, so the gains we have seen do not disappear when tax relief is scheduled to go away.

The tax relief of the past 2 years was based on a principle that when Americans keep more of their own earnings, they spend more and invest more and move the economy forward. We're now seeing that happen. Our economy is on a rising road, and now we must take the remaining steps to ensure that our economy becomes a lasting expansion and our prosperity extends to every corner of America.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 9:20 a.m. on November 7 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on November 8. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 7 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

### **Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Little Rock, Arkansas**

*November 10, 2003*

Thank you all. Thank you all very much. Thanks for coming. Thank you. Please be seated, thanks. Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. I appreciate your fine words, Skinny. *[Laughter]* I got off the airplane, I wasn't sure who I was looking at. *[Laughter]*

So we get in the limousine, and we're driving here from the airport, and the Governor says, "Do you still follow college football?" *[Laughter]* I wasn't exactly sure what he was driving at. I said, "Yeah, I pay attention to it." He said, "Were you paying attention to it a couple of weeks ago?" I said, "Yes, I sure was, Governor. Congratulations to the Hawgs."

Thank you all for coming today. What we're doing today is we're laying the foundation for what is going to be a victory in Arkansas in '04 and a nationwide victory in '04.

I want to thank you for your hard work and for your strong support. I want to thank you for what you did in 2000. I remember—*[applause]*—yes. I remember coming as the last stop we made prior to getting back to Texas after a long, long campaign. And we went to northwest Arkansas, and the crowds



were huge. I remember flying over and seeing the line of red lights, all trying to get into the event. It was really a—put the wind at my back coming off of a tough campaign, the people of Arkansas did. I want thank you for support then. I want to thank you for the support that you've shown today. I want to thank you for what you're fixing to do, which is to man the grassroots and to get on the phones and get the signs out and to turn out the vote. When you're out working the vote right now, you tell them the President is focused on keeping America strong and secure and prosperous and free.

The political season will come in its own time. I'm loosening up—[laughter]—and I'm getting ready. But I got a job to do, and I'll keep working on the people's business, doing what's right for America. I've got a job to do for everybody who lives in this country.

My regret today is that the First Lady isn't traveling with me. You drew the short straw. [Laughter] But I'm proud of Laura. She's a great wife, a great mother, and is a fantastic First Lady for America. She sends her very best to all her friends here in Arkansas.

Speaking about our friends, I'm proud to call your Governor friend and Janet Huckabee friend. Mike is doing a great job for the people of Arkansans. He's a strong leader. I appreciate his friendship, and I appreciate his leadership. I also want to thank your Lieutenant Governor, Win Rockefeller, and Lissenne for being here today. It's good to see you again, Governor. I appreciate your friendship.

You got a fine Congressman named Boozman representing you in Washington, DC. John, you're doing a great job. I'm proud to call you ally and friend. I want thank all the State and local officials who are here. I see former—some former Congressmen. Jay Dickey and John Paul, it's good to see you.

I appreciate the grassroots folks who are here, the people who are making this party work. I want to thank Warren Stephens and French Hill, who are the State finance co-chairmen, for taking on the task of seeing to it that my campaign and the campaign of Vice President Cheney's is well-organized and well-funded. I appreciate all the folks

who have made this event such a great success. Most of all, I thank you all for coming.

In the last 2½ years, our Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems instead of passing them on to future Presidents and future generations. I came to seize opportunities instead of letting them slip away. My administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and in Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and today, they live in freedom.

Two-and-a-half years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and morale was beginning to suffer. So we increased the defense budgets to prepare for the threats of a new era. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Two-and-a-half years ago, we inherited an economy in recession. And then our Nation was attacked, and we had some scandals in corporate America, and we went to war to make America more secure, all of which affected the people's confidence. But we acted. We passed tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going again, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

I know that when Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows and people are more likely to find a job. So we're returning more money to the people to help them raise their families. We're reducing taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're giving small businesses incentives so they can hire new people. With all these actions, we have laid the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs across America so every single person in this country can realize the great American Dream.

Two-and-a-half years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform, but there wasn't much action. So I acted. I called for and the Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation.

I appreciate your Governor leading on this issue. I appreciate the fine reading initiative you got here in this State. You see, we believe that every child in every public school can learn to read and write and add and subtract. We are challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations.

We've increased the Federal budget to help Title I students, to help make sure every child can read. But we expect results. The days of excuse-making are over. We want results in every single classroom so that not one single child is left behind.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to better safeguard our borders and ports and to protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for Arkansas' farmers and ranchers and entrepreneurs. We passed budget agreements that are helping to maintain spending discipline in Washington, DC. On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people.

And the United States Congress has shared in these substantial achievements. I want to thank John. I also want to thank Speaker Hastert and Leader Frist. They're good friends. We're working hard to change the tone in Washington, DC. There's a lot of needless politics in the Nation's Capital. We're focused on the people's business. You sent us to Washington to work on behalf of the people, not special interests, not lobbyists, but the people. And that's what we're doing.

I've surrounded myself with people in my administration who are focused on results. I have put together a fine team of public servants to represent America. There is no finer Vice President in our Nation's history than Dick Cheney. Mother may have a second opinion. *[Laughter]*

In 2½ years, we have come far, but our work is only beginning. I've set great goals

worthy of a great nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we must work for a society of prosperity and compassion so that every single citizen has a chance to work and to succeed and to realize the promise of America. It should become clear—it should be clear—that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it.

The war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed.

We are confronting that danger in Iraq, where Saddam holdouts and foreign terrorists are desperately trying to throw Iraq into chaos by attacking coalition forces and aid workers and innocent Iraqis. They know that the advance of freedom in Iraq would be a major defeat for the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of America and the civilized world. America will not be intimidated.

We're aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we will not have to face them in our own country. We're calling on other nations to help Iraq to become a free country, which will make the world more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self-government. These are not easy tasks, but they are essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty, because free nations do not support terror. Free nations do not attack their neighbors. Free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest hope and need of every human heart. And I believe that freedom is the right of every person, and I believe that freedom is the future of every nation.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in this world, and when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, America is now committed to bringing the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children now suffering with AIDS. This great, powerful Nation is a compassionate nation, and we are leading the world in this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We face challenges here at home, and our actions will prove worthy of the challenges. So long as any of our citizens who want to work can't find a job, we must work to make sure the entrepreneurial spirit, the environment for job growth is strong. The numbers look good. I'm encouraged by what I see, but too many of our fellow citizens aren't working.

I've laid out a six-point plan to the United States Congress to make sure job creation remains strong and vibrant. I will stay focused on our economy until the American people are able to put food on the table and take care of their family responsibilities by finding a job.

We have a duty to keep our commitment to America's seniors by strengthening and modernizing Medicare. Congress has taken historic action to improve the lives of older Americans. For the first time since the creation of Medicare, the House and the Senate have passed reforms to increase choices for seniors and provide coverage for prescription drugs. It is time for the House and the Senate to reconcile their differences and to get a bill to my desk. We owe it to our seniors to have a modern health care system available for them, and we owe it to those of us who are going to be seniors to make sure the Medicare system is modern.

And for the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increase the cost of medicine. People who have been harmed by a bad doctor deserve their day in court. Yet the system should not reward lawyers who are simply fishing for a rich settlement. Because frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care, they affect the Federal budget. Therefore, medical liability reform is a national issue

that requires a national solution. I submitted a good bill to reform the medical liability system of our country to the House—to the Congress. The House of Representatives has acted. It is stuck in the United States Senate. It is time for some Senators to understand that no one in this country has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit. We need medical liability reform.

I have a responsibility as the President to make sure the judicial system runs well, and I have met that duty. I've nominated superb men and women to the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. Yet some Members of the United States Senate—you might even know some—[laughter]—are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by filibusters, by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. Is it time for Members of the Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

Congress needs to complete work on a comprehensive energy plan. We must promote energy efficiency and conservation. We must use technologies to be able to use the resources at hand. But for the sake of economic security and for the sake of national security, this Nation must become less reliant on foreign sources of energy.

A strong and prosperous nation must also be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of compassionate conservatism, which means we will apply the best and most effective and most innovative ideas to the task of helping our fellow citizens in need. Still, millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on Government and become independent through hard work must build on the success of welfare reform to bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our fellow citizens. Congress should complete the "Citizen Service Act" so more Americans can serve their communities and their country. And both Houses should reach agreement on my Faith-Based Initiative to support the armies of compassion that are mentoring our children, caring for the homeless, and offering hope to the addicted. Our Government should not fear

faith. We should welcome faith and the healing power of faith into the lives of more of our citizens.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. We want more people owning their own home. Today in America, we have a minority home-ownership gap. I've submitted plans to the United States Congress to close that gap. We want more people owning and managing their own retirement accounts, owning and managing their own health care plans. And we want more people owning their own small business. We understand that when a person owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of America.

In a compassionate society, people respect one another and take responsibility for the decisions they make. The culture of America is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it. If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a new culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make.

If you're fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're worried about the quality of the education in Little Rock, Arkansas, or anywhere in Arkansas, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees.

And in the new responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving a neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourselves. The culture of service, the culture of responsibility is growing here in America. You know, I started what's called the USA Freedom Corps to encourage Americans to extend a compassionate hand to neighbors in need, and the response has been great. People want to serve. People want to help their communities. Policemen and firefighters and people who wear our Nation's uniform are reminding us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes, because they see them every day.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. And I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 2½ years have come to the right nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift up whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it. And we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all. Thank you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. at the Statehouse Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Mike Huckabee of Arkansas and his wife, Janet; Lt. Gov. Win Rockefeller of Arkansas and his wife, Lisenne; Representative John Boozman and former Representatives Jay Dickey and John Paul Hammerschmidt of Arkansas; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq. He also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103-382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89-10).

### **Remarks in a Discussion With Employers and Employees at BMW Manufacturing Corporation in Greer, South Carolina**

*November 10, 2003*

**The President.** Well, Carl, thanks. Yes, I'm delighted to be here. I appreciate so very much you all letting me come by to say a few words. We're going to have kind of a discussion about jobs. When I hear somebody in our country wants to work and can't find a job, it says to me we've got a problem, we've got to keep working to make sure people are able to work. So we're here to really talk about jobs.

Before we do, I do want to say something, though, about this company. I understand 26 of your employees, your fellow employees, are in Iraq. I know a lot of you have got

relatives who serve in the United States military. I want to thank you. I want you to tell them thank you on behalf of a grateful nation for working to see to it that this Nation is secure. You've got to understand that free nations are peaceful nations. The more freedom there is in the world, the more secure America becomes. We must never forget the lessons of September the 11th, 2001. And I want you to pass on to your fellow employees and loved ones, this Commander in Chief is grateful for the sacrifice and service.

Before we get kind of this discussion going on, I want to say a couple of things. I want to thank the Governor for being here. Governor Sanford is here. Senator Lindsey Graham is with us. Congressmen DeMint, Brown, Wilson, and Barrett are with us as well. Speaker Wilkins. When the President shows up, you know, all kinds of people show up. [Laughter] But I'm glad to be in their company. They're good folks. They're friends.

The other thing is, is that we come in a time of pretty upbeat assessment about our economy. More than pretty upbeat—third quarter growth was strong. Last week we saw the unemployment numbers drop. The private sector is growing. Entrepreneurship is vibrant. And about—over 280,000 new jobs were created over the last 3 months, and that's positive. That's really good, particularly if you're somebody looking for work.

But we're here to talk about policies to make it even better. That's what we want. We're not satisfied. And we're not satisfied because I do understand some are struggling.

But with that, Carl, I want to thank you for your hospitality. I look forward to hearing from our fellow citizens about what's on your mind and really am grateful so many of you all showed up and gave me a chance to come and to say hello.

[The discussion continued.]

**The President.** Well, I appreciate it. First of all, it says to me that our workers are the best in the world. People are really productive. You know, you hear this—a lot of talk about trade. You're living the trade world. And if we do a good job about making sure trade is free and fair, people are going to find work here in America. That's what this

is all about. In other words, we welcome people coming here. We welcome their money. I know the workers welcome the chance to work. And we're good about it. We're good at workers. And that's what this plant shows.

And so I appreciate very much, most importantly, the—I appreciate the deployment of capital from overseas to America. But most importantly, I appreciate the hard-working Americans who are making it an attractive place for people to invest right here in South Carolina. We're the most productive workforce in the world right now by far. Our productivity per worker is way out of sight. And we've just got to keep it that way because, you see, high productivity, it creates a short-term problem, unemployment. If one worker can put out more goods, unless the economy grows, it's going to be hard to hire new people. But in the long run, high productivity means better pay, better living.

And so what you've just told me is, this workforce is doing its job. And there's no doubt in my mind this workforce can compete with anybody in the world. And my job is to make sure that we have a level playing field, see that we've got fair trade—free and fair trade. We want free trade because we want you to be able to sell what you make here out of the State of South Carolina overseas. That's what we want. Because if you're not selling those cars overseas, then it's—some of you may not be working, and we want you working.

But I appreciate that, Carl. Thanks.

**Carl Flescher, Jr.** Steve, I wonder if you might want to tell the President a little bit about your company.

**Stephen Thies.** Sure, Carl. Mr. President, Spartanburg Steel and Spartanburg Stainless are two privately held manufacturing companies here. We call ourselves "SSP"; it's a little easier to say than the full name. Spartanburg Steel began production here in 1962, so it's an old company. But we make metal stampings—today, we make metal stampings in welded assemblies for BMW, principally for the X5 sport activity vehicle, which is produced here at the plant. You can see some of our parts are surrounding us here today. You see some metal parts around the room, around the stage. A number of these assemblies are made at our company. Spartanburg

Steel has grown nicely because of its relationship with BMW. That growth is helping our owners, our associates, and our suppliers as well.

Now, we have a second company here in Spartanburg as well. It's called Spartanburg Stainless Products, also "SSP," okay? And Spartanburg Stainless makes metal stampings and assemblies, but we also make beer kegs. We're the only American beer keg manufacturer in North America. *[Laughter]*

**The President.** I quit drinking in '86. *[Laughter]* But I bet some of the people out here use the product. *[Laughter]* I'm not going to point out which ones. *[Laughter]*

**Mr. Thies.** Well, we did notice a dip in demand at a point in time—*[laughter]*—but probably no relationship. *[Laughter]*

**The President.** Pretty observant fellow, aren't you? *[Laughter]*

*[The discussion continued.]*

**The President.** Yes. Let me amplify on that real quick. Sorry to interrupt. Tax policy—good tax policy is important for economic growth. And if you—and I just want to make sure everybody understands what he's talking about there. First of all, I hope you saw the tax relief. Particularly if you're a mom or a dad, you did, because we increased the child credit. We reduced rates. I'm going to tell you why, just so that you understand the logic. If you have more money in your pocket, you're going to demand an additional good or a service. And when you demand an additional good or a service, somebody is going to produce the good or a service. And when somebody produces it, it means somebody is more likely to, first, keep a job, and if there's enough demand out there, somebody is—it means the job base will expand.

What he's talking about was incentives we provided to encourage businesses to invest. And when a business invests in, say, a piece of equipment, somebody has to make the equipment. That in itself encourages economic vitality and growth. The tax relief we passed came at the right time. What we now need to do is make it permanent. Interestingly enough, because of a quirk in the rules in the United States Senate, the tax relief we passed begins to go away in '05. In order

to make sure that people can plan for capital investment and you can plan your lives, the Congress needs to make the tax relief permanent.

*[The discussion continued.]*

**The President.** Good. Well, I presume your company wouldn't be doing well if it hadn't been for somebody willing to invest here in South Carolina and the BMW plant. What people have got to understand is that when BMW builds cars, there's a spinoff effect. Businesses in the area benefit as well. The more work you all do at BMW, the more likely somebody is going to be doing work in an associated supplier. Economic vitality depends upon the money circulating in our economy. And not only does tax policy help, but good trade policy helps, being willing to welcome foreign investment into the State of South Carolina.

What I'm more interested in is, are you working? I don't really care who owns the plant. What I want to know is, are they paying you when they say they're going to pay you? Is your job—is your check showing up?

*[The discussion continued.]*

**The President.** Yes, I appreciate that. These stories are stories of an economy that's changing. We went through—we've been through a tough time. There's no doubt about it. We've been through a recession. The enemy hit us on September the 11th. It affected not only our psychology but it affected the economy. It just did. It's just a reality.

Unfortunately, we had some corporate citizens who didn't tell the truth. They forgot what it means to be a responsible citizen. They kind of fudged the numbers. They're going to be held to account, by the way. That's how you need to treat people who—*[applause]*.

We marched to war. I don't if you remember, on your TV screens last summer it—a year ago, summer—it said, "March to War." You turn on the TV, and there it says, "March to War." That's not a very conducive environment in which people are willing to take risk. It's not a positive thought. It's a—necessary, in my judgment, obviously, to

make America secure, but it's not positive. I know it's not.

So we've overcome a lot. Plus, the economy is restructuring. And so the fundamental question is, what do you do about it? One, you encourage growth, the creation of new jobs. Most new jobs in America are created by small businesses. And so we had a small-business focus. But the other thing we've got to understand is that as the society becomes more productive and the nature of the jobs change, we've got to make sure there's worker training programs. We've got over 1,700 one-stop sites for workers to go to. These guys did their own one-stop shopping. But not everybody may have the same ability to do that. And you can get on a computer and find out the jobs available in your neighborhood.

And as importantly, the job training programs available—I mean, somebody listening out there today who is wondering whether or not they can find work, there are ample opportunities to find job training programs that will help train you for jobs which actually exist. And that's a very important concept. There's a little bit of a change—it used to be that Government would judge you on just, did you have job training programs. And therefore, they have 1,000 hairdressers for 50 jobs, which didn't make sense. What you're trying to do now is match demand for jobs with jobs—with the people.

There's a lot of Pell grant money available, and that's important for people to know, so they can go to a community college. And then there's monies available for community colleges—I know the Governor is working on this—to make sure the community colleges become laboratories for educating workforce for the jobs which exist. There are jobs available.

And so the fundamental question is, how do we help people find those jobs? And one thing we've got to do is focus on—you know, technology roars through the economy and society, and labor is left behind. And so we've got to make sure labor stays caught up. As society changes, as the economy changes, we've got to have programs that actually make sense and programs that focus—the job training programs—on making sure that the workforce, the most productive in the world,

has got the skills necessary to meet the jobs of the future.

I want to thank you two guys for taking the initiative. We can have every job training program in the world sitting out there, but it also requires people willing to take the initiative and be responsible citizens. I appreciate the example you set. I'm glad BMW is vibrant and doing well. I'm glad you're selling products overseas as well as here at home, so Spartanburg has had the opportunity to hire these two guys. This is a success story. And I want to thank you very much for being a part of it. I appreciate you.

*[The discussion continued.]*

**The President.** Good job. Remember, I talked about job training. A good company is one that works hard to train the workforce. A good company is a company which says, "How do we keep our workers on the front edge of change?" It sounds like BMW does that, and I appreciate you then passing on the skills you learned. And a good company also provides good health care, good retirement, and obviously, the added benefit of letting people travel to see a different part of the world, which is a pretty interesting concept when you think about it, yes.

Well, thank you for sharing your story with us.

*[The discussion continued.]*

**The President.** Well, I appreciate that story. Look, I know there's a lot of textile workers here in this State who are worried about their future. Some have lost their job, and obviously we care about that a lot. And in the Government we'll try to do everything we can to make sure that the rules are fair.

But Henry's story is an interesting story, and the wife's story is an interesting story, about somebody who said, "Wait a minute, there's a better job." And it does take—and it's hard to leave work; I understand that. It's unsettling. But you've just got to know—and I want to emphasize again what Henry said—there are programs to help people transition from one kind of job to a job which has got more security and a better paying job—and a better paying job.

And that's what's happening in the workforce, the jobs are better paying. There's

health care jobs; there's jobs in the manufacturing sector. And a productive workforce means that people are going to be able to make more money over the long term. That's what that means. And we've just got to make sure that we help people get there.

And part of the reason I've come to talk with people who've been through this before is, I want people who are listening to know that there is hope, that they're going to have to have a little drive, but there's plenty of help for people who are trying to transition from an industry that may not be on firm footing to other jobs that will be long-lasting jobs. It's important for people here in South Carolina to know that. And I want to thank you, Henry, for sharing your story, and tell your wife congratulations on being—where is she? Yes, I'll tell her. I'll tell her myself. [Laughter] Thank you for doing what you did. It's a great example to set. And congratulations.

[The discussion continued.]

**The President.** Yes, Barry, before you begin, tell them what you told me about Texas. Remember, you were going to—

**Barry Bell.** Well, actually, I was supposed to be going to Texas this week for a hunting trip. But I sort of backed out of that, and I'm here with you now. [Laughter]

**The President.** That's right, yes. I knew he was my kind of guy when he said he wanted to go on a hunting trip. I don't know if I would have canceled if I'd have been him, but thank you. [Laughter]

[The discussion continued.]

**The President.** I appreciate the story. Let me pick up on one thing. Again, obviously it's a good company, which is one that keeps your people on the cutting edge of change by having training.

I also want to pick up on what he just said. It's a little off the subject, but a responsible citizen is somebody who loves their child with all their heart, a citizen who says, "I want to put my family"—is a citizen I'd love to have working for me—a citizen who said, "I want my family first, I weep when I think about the thought of missing my child's baseball games," the kind of guy I want working

for me, the kind of guy I want working with me. I appreciate that.

[The discussion continued.]

**The President.** Well, I appreciate that. It's like, I was in North Carolina the other day, and the hospital people are looking for work, so they went to this junior college, a community college, and helped the people design a curriculum that would then enable people to come out of the course with the skills necessary to be hired. And that's what we've got to do. We've got to make sure that we tailor curriculum for the jobs which will exist, because there's a lot of fine people in our country, hard-working, decent, honorable people, that all they want is a chance. And when the economy races by them, all they're asking for is, "Give me some skills so I can go out and be a productive employee." And sometimes you find it inside your company. Sometimes it requires a community college to have the program necessary. All the time it requires a citizen initiative; that's what it requires.

You did mention Government. Just remember, the role of the Government is to see to it that this economy gets going by having good policy. The tax policy is good policy. The health care policy for small business is important. We've got one other thing—education policy is important, obviously.

There's one other thing I want to mention right quick, because it's now up in Congress. Manufacturing companies need energy. Like, you're not going to be working long if you don't have energy to run this plant. It's a practical matter. And we've got an energy bill that we're trying to get out, an energy bill which says we'll work on conservation, an energy bill that says our electricity system needs to be modern. You may remember what happened last summer. I mean, there was a pretty clear signal that parts of the electricity grid need to be modernized; they're old and ancient and tired. The utilities—we're working on voluntary reliability standards; I think they ought to be mandatory reliability standards. That means if you're responsible for moving electricity, it must be mandatory that you've got reliability in your system.



So we've got an energy bill up there. Let me just make this very clear to you. We can find energy at home, and we need to do that. We can do it in environmentally friendly ways by using technology. We need to have clean coal technology. We need to be finding natural gas in our own hemisphere. For the sake of your economic security and your job security and for the sake of national security, this country must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy.

Listen, I'm honored you all came out to say hello. I appreciate you giving me a chance to—Carl and you all—to come and talk about jobs and what's happening in the economy and how we can continue to create an environment for job creation. I'm excited about the future because I know the nature of America. We've overcome a lot in this country. We really have. But I'm not surprised, because I know the nature of the citizens who live in this country. People are tough when they need to be tough and compassionate when they need to be compassionate, people who work hard. As I said, and I meant it, the best workforce in the world is right here in America, right here in front of me.

There's going to be other challenges in front of America. But there's no doubt in my mind we will meet every challenge because of the nature of this country. This country is freedom's home. This country is freedom's defender. And this country believes the American Dream ought to be available to everybody. And we need to create that environment so people can realize that dream.

I am so proud to be with you all. I want to thank you for your hospitality. May God bless you and your families, and may God continue to bless our great country. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 4:10 p.m. Participants in the discussion included: Barry Bell, production section leader, Carl Flescher, Jr., vice president for corporate communications, and Archie "Lane" Gist and Henry Campbell, production associates, BMW Manufacturing Corp.; Brian Ludwiczak, maintenance supervisor, and Fred Wilson, quality manager, Spartanburg Steel Products; and Stephen Thies, president and chief executive officer, Spartanburg Steel Products and Spartanburg Stainless Products. In his remarks, the President also referred to Gov. Mark Sanford

of South Carolina; and David H. Wilkins, speaker, South Carolina House of Representatives.

### **Statement on Signing the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2004**

*November 10, 2003*

Today, I have signed into law H.R. 2691, the Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2004.

Under the appropriations heading "Construction" for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Act refers to one subsection of title 25 of the United States Code that do not exist (25 U.S.C. 2505(f)) and one provision in title 25 that exists (25 U.S.C. 2005(a)) but which, as is plain from the text of the Act, is not the provision to which the Act was intended to refer. The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall submit immediately on my behalf for the consideration of the Congress legislation to correct these errors in the Act. If corrective legislation is not enacted before execution of the provisions under the appropriations heading becomes necessary, the Attorney General shall provide a legal opinion to the Secretary of the Interior on how to faithfully execute the appropriations heading in light of the errors it contains.

The executive branch shall construe sections 101 and 325 of the Act, which purport to require the executive branch to submit to the Congress in certain circumstances a request for a supplemental appropriation or for enactment of other legislation, in a manner consistent with the President's constitutional authority to submit for the consideration of the Congress such measures as the President judges necessary and expedient.

Many provisions in the Act purport to require the consent or approval of committees of the Congress before executive branch execution of aspects of the Act or purport to preclude executive branch execution of a provision of the Act upon the written disapproval of such committees. The executive

branch shall construe such provisions to require only notification to the Congress, because any other construction would contravene the constitutional principles set forth by the United States Supreme Court in 1983 in its decision in *INS v. Chadha*.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
November 10, 2003.

**Proclamation 7733—Veterans Day, 2003**

*November 10, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

**A Proclamation**

The willingness of America's veterans to sacrifice for our country has earned them our lasting gratitude. On this, our Nation's 50th annual Veterans Day observance, we celebrate and honor the patriots who have fought to protect the democratic ideals that are the foundation of our country.

When the armistice ending World War I was signed on November 11, 1918, more than 4.7 million Americans put down their arms and turned to the work of strengthening our Nation. The end of that first global conflict was initially commemorated as Armistice Day. In 1954, the Congress renamed the day as Veterans Day to recognize all those who have served in our Armed Forces.

Throughout our history, loyal citizens from every corner of America have willingly assumed the duty of military life. And time after time, in conflicts across the globe, they have proven that democracy is mightier than tyranny. From World War I and World War II, to the conflicts in Korea, Vietnam, and the Persian Gulf, to the recent battles in the war on terror, our military has built a great tradition of courageous and faithful service. Our veterans have helped bring freedom to countries around the world. Free nations and peoples liberated by American troops are grateful for the long, distinguished line of American veterans who have come to their aid.

Today, our veterans inspire new generations of Americans as we work to defeat terrorism and advance peace. In respect for and

recognition of the contributions our service men and women have made to the cause of peace and freedom around the world, the Congress has provided (5 U.S.C. 6103(a)) that November 11 of each year shall be set aside as a legal public holiday to honor veterans.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim November 11, 2003, as Veterans Day and urge all Americans to observe November 9 through November 15, 2003, as National Veterans Awareness Week. I encourage all Americans to recognize the valor and sacrifice of our veterans through appropriate ceremonies and prayers. I call upon Federal, State, and local officials to display the flag of the United States and to participate in patriotic activities in their communities. I invite civic and fraternal organizations, places of worship, schools, businesses, unions, and the media to support this national observance with suitable commemorative expressions and programs.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 13, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 14. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language version of this proclamation.

**Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Reception in Greenville, South Carolina**

*November 10, 2003*

Thank you all for coming. I'm honored to be here. Please be seated.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for those warm remarks. South Carolina will always have a big part of my political career. I'm proud of all the people here. I want to thank you for your friendship. I remember 2000 very well. Today we're laying the foundation for what will be a South Carolina and a national victory in 2004.

I'm proud to have your support. I'm loosening up. [*Laughter*] I'm getting ready. But politics will come in its own time. See, I've got a job to do. And when you go to your coffee shops and your farm implementation dealers or your places of worship, you tell them that George W. Bush is working hard for everybody, working hard to make sure this country remains strong and secure and prosperous and free.

I appreciate my friend David Wilkins. He's the kind of friend that is with you when times are good and when times are bad. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your leadership on this event—made an enormous difference tonight for this very successful fundraiser. I also want to thank your dear wife, Susan. You and I both married very well.

Speaking about marrying well, I am sorry that Laura is not here, and I'm sure you are as well. [*Laughter*] You drew the short straw. [*Laughter*] She is a fabulous wife, a great mother, and she's doing a wonderful job as our country's First Lady.

I'm honored that the Governor is here, Governor Mark Sanford. I appreciate his leadership and his friendship, and I also appreciate the great service that Jenny, the wonderful first lady of South Carolina, is providing to your State. Thank you for coming, Governor.

I see you don't really care who you sit next to. [*Laughter*] You've chosen to sit next to the Senator from the great State of South Carolina, Senator Lindsey Graham, strong ally and good friend. I appreciate you coming.

South Carolina has sent some fantastic people to Congress, good allies, good friends. Henry Brown and Joe Wilson and Gresham Barrett and Jim DeMint are people you can be proud of that represent you. I know this is DeMint's district. He's doing a fine job as a United States Congressman. But I'm proud of all of them that are representing your great State there in Washington.

I know the Lieutenant Governor is with us today, Lieutenant Governor Bauer. I know the attorney general is with us, Henry McMaster. I know there's other State officials who are here. I want to thank you all for coming tonight.

Some of my club members are with us. I'm a member of the ex-Governors club, and so is Beasley, Campbell, and Edwards. I appreciate all three of those distinguished South Carolinian citizens for joining us tonight.

Speaking about ex-members, Charlie Condon, who is a former attorney general of this great State, is with us, and a friend of mine as well. I appreciate Charlie coming.

Most of all, I'm glad you're here. I want to thank you for working hard to get this event on. My friend Mercer Reynolds is the national finance chairman for Bush-Cheney '04. He's a fellow from Cincinnati, Ohio. He was educated up the road in Chapel Hill. He still came anyway. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate Dr. Eddie Floyd and John Rainey and Barry Wynn, all of them personal friends. All of them have worked hard to make this a tremendously successful event.

I want to thank the grassroots activists who are here, the people who are going to put up the signs and mail the mailers and get on the telephone to turn out the vote. I cannot win without your help. I want to thank you for what you've done in the past. I want to thank you for what you're fixing to do when we come down the pike next year. I appreciate Sarah Reese. I appreciate Todd Graham leading the pledge. And I want to thank the Governor's School Choir for joining us as well.

In the last 2½ years, this Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems, not to pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I came to seize opportunities instead of letting them slip away. My administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and in Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and today, they live in freedom.

Two-and-a-half years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed, and

morale was beginning to suffer. So we increased the defense budgets to prepare for the threats of a new era, and today, no one can question the skill, the strength, and the spirit of the United States military.

Two-and-a-half years ago, we inherited an economy in recession. And then our country was attacked, and we had scandals in corporate America, and we marched to war for our own security and for the peace of the world, all of which affected the people's confidence. But I acted. We passed tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account. And to get the economy going again, I have twice led the United States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people. I understand that when Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows and people are more likely to find a job. So we're returning more money to the people to help them raise their families, reducing taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're providing small businesses with incentives so they can hire new people.

With all these actions, this administration has laid the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs across America so every single person in this country has a chance to realize the American Dream.

Two-and-a-half years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform, but there wasn't much action. So I called for and Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation. We believe every child can learn to read and write and add and subtract. We are challenging the soft bigotry of low expectations. We've increased Federal funding, but in return for additional Federal dollars, we expect results in every classroom so that not one single child is left behind.

We created the Department of Homeland Security to better safeguard our ports and borders and better protect the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up new markets for South Carolina entrepreneurs and manufacturers and farmers. We passed budget agreements to help maintain spending discipline in Washington, DC.

On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people. And the Congress gets a lot of credit for the success we have had. I've enjoyed my work with the South Carolina delegation. I enjoy working with Speaker Denny Hastert, Majority Leader Bill Frist, two fine Americans.

We're working hard to change the tone in Washington, DC. There's too much needless politics in the Nation's Capital. We're doing the people's business by focusing on results, and we're achieving good results for the people. Those are the kind of people I've attracted in my administration. I want people who are results-oriented people, can-do people, people from all walks of life. I have put together a fantastic administration for the American people. Our country has had no finer Vice President than Dick Cheney. Mother may have a second opinion. [*Laughter*]

We've done a lot in 2½ years. We've come far, but our work is only beginning. I've set great goals worthy of a great nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we must work for a society of prosperity and compassion so that every citizen has a chance to work and to succeed and to realize the promise of our country.

It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it. The war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed.

We are confronting that danger in Iraq, where Saddam holdouts and foreign terrorists are desperately trying to throw Iraq into chaos by attacking coalition forces and aid workers and innocent Iraqis. They know that the advance of freedom in Iraq would be a major defeat for the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of the United States and the civilized world. America will not be intimidated.

We are aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we do not have to face them in our own country. We're calling on other nations to help Iraq to build a free country, which will make us all more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and move toward self-government. These aren't easy tasks, but they're essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror.

Yet, our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty, because free nations do not support terror, free nations do not attack their neighbors, free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror. Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. And I believe that freedom is the right of every person, and I believe that freedom is the future of every nation.

America also understands that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in this world. And when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, America is now committed to bringing the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children suffering with AIDS. This great, strong, compassionate land is leading the world in this incredibly important work of human rescue.

We've got challenges here at home as well. We will prove equal to those challenges. Anytime one of our citizens who wants to work can't find a job, it says to me that we must continue to strive to enhance the entrepreneurial spirit of America. We've had some good numbers recently. We're making progress. But enough of our—not enough of our citizens are working.

I spent some quality time today at the BMW plant talking about jobs and job creation and job training. So long as people are looking for work, this President and this administration will work for a pro-growth policy so our people can find work.

We have a duty to keep our commitment to America's seniors by strengthening and modernizing Medicare. The Congress has taken historic action to improve the lives of

older citizens. For the first time since the creation of Medicare, the House and the Senate have passed reforms to increase the choices for our seniors and to provide coverage for prescription drugs. It is now time for the House and the Senate to iron out their differences and to get a good bill on my desk so we keep the promise to America's seniors to have a modern health care system.

For the sake of health care, we also need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increase the cost of medicine. People who have been harmed by a bad doc deserve their day in court. Yet the system should not reward lawyers who are simply fishing for a rich settlement. Frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care, and they therefore affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue which requires a national solution. The House of Representatives passed a good bill. The bill is stuck in the Senate. Some Senators must recognize that no one has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit. We need medical liability reform.

I have a responsibility as President to make sure the judicial system runs well, and I have met that duty. I have nominated superb men and women to the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. Some members of the Senate are trying to keep my nominees off the bench by blocking up-or-down votes. Every judicial nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. It is time for Members of this U.S. Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

The Congress needs to complete work on a comprehensive energy plan. This Nation must promote energy efficiency and conservation, no doubt about it. But we must use our technologies to be able to use the resources we have at hand in environmentally friendly ways. We need clean coal technology. We need more natural gas exploration. We need safe nuclear energy. For the sake of economic security and for the sake of national security, we must become less reliant on foreign sources of energy.

Our prosperous and compassionate—prosperous and strong Nation must be a compassionate nation. I will continue to advance our agenda of compassionate conservatism,

which says we'll apply the most innovative and effective ways and ideas to help our fellow citizens who hurt. There are still millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on Government and become independent through hard work. We must build on the success of welfare reform to bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our fellow citizens.

Congress should complete the "Citizen Service Act" so that more Americans can serve their communities and their country. Both Houses should reach agreement on my Faith-Based Initiative to support the armies of compassion that are mentoring our children and caring for the homeless and offering hope to the addicted. People of all faiths in America hear a universal call. People of all faiths can do things Government cannot do, which is to heal broken hearts. Our Government must not fear the influence of faith in helping people who hurt in our society.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all, including the independence and dignity that come from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. We want more people to own their own home. Today in America, we have a homeownership gap, a minority homeownership gap. I proposed plans to the United States Congress to close that gap. We want more people to own and manage their own retirement accounts. We want people to own and manage their own health care plans. We want more people owning their own small business. This administration understands that when a person owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of America.

In a compassionate society, people respect one another and take responsibility for the decisions they make. The culture of America is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we are responsible for the decisions we make in life.

If you're fortunate enough to be a mother or a father, you are responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're concerned about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're re-

sponsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in the responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving a neighbor just like we would like to be loved ourselves.

The culture of service and responsibility is growing here in America. I started what's called the USA Freedom Corps to encourage Americans to extend a compassionate hand to a neighbor in need, and the response has been strong. People are signing up to help. Faith-based programs and charities are vibrant here in America. Firemen and policemen and people who wear our Nation's uniform are reminding us what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Our children again believe in heroes, because they see them every day.

In these changing times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of America. And I've been privileged to see the compassion and the character of the American people. All the tests of the last 2 1/2 years have come to the right nation. We're a strong country, and we use that strength to defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves. Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all. Thank you very much for coming.

NOTE: The President spoke at 6:12 p.m. at the Palmetto Expo Center. In his remarks, he referred to David H. Wilkins, speaker, South Carolina House of Representatives, and his wife, Margaret Susan; Lt. Gov. R. Andre Bauer and former Governors David M. Beasley, Carroll A. Campbell, and James B. Edwards of South Carolina; Eddie Floyd, John Rainey, and Barry Wynn, South Carolina State finance cochairmen, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; opera singer Sarah Reese; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

**Remarks at a Veterans Day  
Ceremony in Arlington, Virginia**  
*November 11, 2003*

Thank you all very much. Thank you for the warm welcome. Thank you, Secretary Principi, for doing a really fine job to represent our Nation's veterans. Members of the Cabinet, Members of the Congress, members of our military, veterans, Commander Berger, representatives of veterans organizations, and fellow Americans: Laura and I are proud to join all of you and citizens across our country as we honor the service of America's veterans.

We observe Veterans Day on an anniversary—not of a great battle or of the beginning of a war but of a day when war ended and our Nation was again at peace. Ever since the armistice of November the 11th, 1918, this has been a day to remember our debt to all who have worn the uniform of the United States.

Our veterans have borne the costs of America's wars and have stood watch over America's peace. And today, every veteran can be certain: The Nation you served and the people you defended are grateful.

Our Nation knows this national cemetery as the final resting place of those lost to the violence of war. Yet, most of the markers here stand over the graves of Americans who lived beyond their years of military service. On the hills of Arlington and in the daily lives of our country, veterans have a special place. We honor them all for their service in uniform. And we honor America's veterans for the full lives of their service they continue to lead.

Today, more than 25 million Americans wear the proud title of veteran or retired military. Their ranks include young men and women who gave good years to our all-volunteer military and recently returned to civilian life. Our veterans include more than 11 million men and women from the conflicts of Korea and Vietnam who earned this Nation's gratitude and respect. More than 4 million living Americans served in World War II, under the command of Eisenhower and Bradley and Nimitz. And on Veterans Day 2003, it is still possible to thank, in person, almost 200 Americans who were in uniform

when the guns of World War I went silent 85 years from today. All the men who served when Woodrow Wilson was the Commander in Chief are now more than 100 years old, and they can know that America is still proud of them.

Every veteran has his or her own story of entering military service. Many enlisted on Monday morning, December 8th, 1941, or at the beginning of other conflicts. For some, military life began with the initiation at an academy. For others, it began with a letter from the United States Government. Yet when their service is complete, veterans of every era, every background, and every branch have certain things in common. And those shared commitments and experience formed bonds that last a lifetime.

Every veteran has lived by a strict code of discipline. Every veteran understands the meaning of personal accountability and loyalty and shared sacrifice. From the moment you repeated the oath to the day of your honorable discharge, your time belonged to America; your country came before all else. And whether you served abroad or at home, you have shared in the responsibility of maintaining the finest fighting force in the world.

Veterans who took the oath and served in battle have known the hardships and the fears and the tragic losses of war. These memories follow them through life and are sometimes hard to bear. Yet our war veterans, wherever they fought, can know this: In the harshest hours of conflict, they serve just and honorable purposes.

Americans are a peaceful people, and this Nation has always gone to war reluctantly and always for a noble cause. America's war veterans have fought for the security of this Nation, for the safety of our friends, and for the peace of the world. They humbled tyrants and defended the innocent and liberated the oppressed. And across the Earth, you will find entire nations that once lived in fear, where men and women still tell of the day when Americans came and set them free.

America's mission in the world continues, and we count on the same kind of people to carry it out. Today, in assignments around the world, more than 1.4 million Americans are on active duty, earning the title of veteran by serving in the cause of freedom. In 2 years

and 2 months since our country was attacked, the men and women of our Armed Forces have engaged the terrorist enemy on many fronts. They've confronted grave dangers to defend the safety of the American people. They have liberated two nations, Afghanistan and Iraq, delivering more than 50 million people from the hands of dictators. Those who serve and fight today are adding great achievements of their own to America's history. America is grateful for their daring, grateful for their honor, and grateful for their sacrifice.

On this Veterans Day, with our Nation at war, Americans are deeply aware of the current military struggle and of recent sacrifice. Young Americans have died in liberating Iraq and Afghanistan. They've died in securing freedom in those countries. The loss is terrible. It is borne especially by the families left behind. But in their hurt and in their loneliness, I want these families to know your loved ones served in a good and just cause. They died in distant lands to fight terror, to advance freedom, and to protect America. They did not live to be called veterans, but this Nation will never forget their lives of service and all they did for us.

At this hour, many thousands are following their duty at great risk. One young man serving in Iraq recently said this: "We in the military signed up and pledged to protect this great country of ours from enemies foreign and domestic." "We're fighting," he said, "so that the next generation might never have to experience anything like September the 11th, 2001."

Today and every day, the prayers of the American people are with those who wear our country's uniform. They serve a great cause and they follow a great tradition, handed down to them by America's veterans. Our veterans from every era are the finest of citizens. We owe them the life we know today. They command the respect of the American people, and they have our lasting gratitude.

Thank you for coming today. May God bless America, and may God bless all who defend it.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:38 a.m. at Arlington National Cemetery. In his remarks, he referred to David Berger, national commander,

Army and Navy Union of the United States of America.

## **Remarks at the Heritage Foundation President's Club Luncheon**

*November 11, 2003*

Ed, thank you very much. It's an honor to be here. I appreciate your invitation. I want to thank you for your decades of leadership in the conservative movement. Presidents come and go, except here at the Heritage Foundation. [Laughter] I appreciate being with your good bride, Linda, the trustees of the Heritage, the longtime Heritage supporters, and the Ronald Reagan Fellow at Heritage, a man who is a fine leader, a fine Attorney General, Ed Meese.

It's appropriate that we gather in the building named for Ronald Reagan. The Heritage Foundation emerged as an important voice in Washington during the Reagan years. The American people gave Ronald Reagan his mandate for leadership. Yet it was the Heritage Foundation, with a book by that title, from which he drew ideas and inspiration. Ever since, in the councils of Washington, Heritage has been an advocate for free enterprise, traditional values, and the advance of liberty around the world. My administration has benefited from your good work, and so has our country. Thank you for what you do.

We meet on Veterans Day, and I know there are many veterans in this room. On behalf of the Nation, I thank you for your service to our country. The title of "veteran" is a term of great respect in America. All who served, whether for a few years or for many, have put the Nation's needs above their own. All stood ready if the order came to risk everything for their country's cause. Our wars have taken from us some of our finest citizens and every hour of the lifetimes they had hoped to live. And the courage of our military has given us every hour we live in freedom.

In every generation, members of the Armed Forces have been loyal to one another and faithful to the ideals of America. After the Second World War, returning veterans often said they had just been doing their jobs,



or didn't talk about their service at all. Yet they knew the stakes of the fight they had been in and the magnitude of what they had achieved. Long after putting away his uniform, one American expressed his pride in having served in World War II. He said, "I feel like I played my part in turning this from a century of darkness into a century of light." This is true of all who have served and sacrificed in the struggles of the 20th century. They maintained the greatest fighting force in the world. They kept our country free, and we're grateful to them all.

We come to this Veterans Day in a time of war. And today's military is acting in the finest traditions of the veterans who came before them. They've given all that we've asked of them. They are showing bravery in the face of ruthless enemies and compassion to people in great need. Our men and women in uniform are warriors, and they are liberators, strong and kind and decent. By their courage, they keep us safe; by their honor, they make us proud.

When we lose such Americans in battle, we lose our best. And the time—this time of brave achievement is also a time of sacrifice. Not far from this place, at Army and Navy medical centers, young servicemembers are recovering from injuries of war. Not far from here, at Arlington National Cemetery, as in hometowns across America, we have laid to rest young men and women who died in distant lands. For their families, this is a terrible sorrow, and we pray for their comfort. For the Nation, there is a feeling of loss, and we remember and we honor every name.

Our people in uniform know the cost and risk of war. They also know what is at stake in this war. Army Command Sergeant Major Ioakimo Falaniko recently lost his son, Private Jonathan Falaniko, in an attack near Baghdad. Father and son both served in Iraq in the same unit, the 1st Armored Division's Engineer Brigade. At his son's memorial service, Command Sergeant Major Falaniko said this: "What our country brings to Iraq is a chance for freedom and democracy. We're making a difference every day. My son died for a good cause. He answered the Nation's call."

Our mission in Iraq and Afghanistan is clear to our servicemembers and clear to our enemies. Our men and women are fighting to secure the freedom of more than 50 million people who recently lived under two of the cruelest dictatorships on Earth. Our men and women are fighting to help democracy and peace and justice rise in a troubled and violent region. Our men and women are fighting terrorist enemies thousands of miles away in the heart and center of their power so that we do not face those enemies in the heart of America. Our men and women are fighting for the security of America and for the advance of freedom, and that is a cause worth fighting for.

The work we are in is not easy, yet it is essential. The failure of democracy in Afghanistan and Iraq would condemn every advocate of freedom in those two countries to prison or death and would extinguish the democratic hopes of millions in the Middle East. The failure of democracies in those two countries would provide new bases for the terrorist network and embolden terrorists and their allies around the world. The failure of democracy in those two countries would convince terrorists that America backs down under attack, and more attacks on America would surely follow.

The terrorists cite the examples of Beirut and Somalia as evidence that America can be made to run. Five years ago, one of the terrorists said that an attack could make America retreat in less than 24 hours. The terrorists are mistaken.

The United States will complete our work in Iraq and in Afghanistan. Democracy in those two countries will succeed, and that success will be a great milestone in the history of liberty. A democratic revolution that has reached across the globe will finally take root in the Middle East. The stagnation and isolation and anger of that region will give way to progress and opportunity. America and the world will be safer from catastrophic violence because terror is not the tool of the free.

The United States has made an unbreakable commitment to the success of freedom in Afghanistan and Iraq. We have a strategy to see that commitment through. In Afghanistan, we're helping to build a free and stable

democracy as we continue to track down and destroy Taliban and Al Qaida forces. Following years of cruel oppression, the Afghan people are living with hope, and they're making steady progress.

In Iraq, the terrorists have chosen to make a stand and to test our resolve. Their violence is concentrated in a relatively small area of that country. Yet the terrorists are dangerous. For the sake of Iraq's future, for the sake of America's security, these killers must be defeated.

After the swift advance of our coalition to Baghdad and the removal of Saddam Hussein from power, some remnants of the regime fled from the battlefield. Over time, Ba'ath Party and Fedayeen fighters and other Saddam loyalists have organized to attack our forces, to terrorize international aid workers, and to murder innocent Iraqis. These bitter holdouts would rather see Iraqis dead than see them free.

Foreign jihadists have arrived across Iraq's borders in small groups with the goal of installing a Taliban-like regime. Also present in the country are some terrorists from Ansar Islam and from Al Qaida, who are always eager to join in the killing and who seek revenge after their defeat in Afghanistan. Saddam loyalists and foreign terrorists may have different long-term goals, but they share a near-term strategy: to terrorize Iraqis and to intimidate America and our allies.

Recent reporting suggests that despite their differences, these killers are working together to spread chaos and terror and fear. Since the fall of Saddam Hussein, 93 percent of terror attacks have occurred in Baghdad and five of Iraq's 18 provinces. The violence is focused in 200 square miles known as the Ba'athist Triangle, the home area of Saddam Hussein and most of his associates. Here, the enemy is waging the battle, and it is here that the enemy will be defeated.

In the last few months, the adversary has changed its composition and method, and our coalition is adapting accordingly. We're employing the latest battlefield technology to locate mortar positions and roadside bombs. Our forces are moving against specific targets based on intelligence gathered from Iraqis. We're conducting hundreds of daily patrols. Last month alone, we made 1,500 raids

against terrorists. The recent operations have resulted in the capture or death of more than 1,000 killers, the seizure of 4,500 mortar rounds; 1,600 rocket-propelled grenades have been seized, thousands of other weapons and military equipment. Our coalition is on the offensive in Iraq, and we will stay on the offensive.

The long-term security of Iraq will be assured by the Iraqis themselves. One hundred and eighteen thousand Iraqis are now serving as police officers and border guards, civil defense personnel, and in the facilities protection service. Iraq's security forces join in operations with our troops, and they patrol towns and cities independently. Some 700 troops are now serving in the new Iraqi army. Thousands more are being trained, and we expect to see 35,000 Iraqi troops in the field by the end of next year. Increasingly, the Iraqi people are assuming the responsibilities and the risks of protecting their own country. And their willingness to accept these duties is one of the surest signs that the Iraqis want freedom and that the Iraqis are headed toward self-government.

Under our strategy, increasing authority is being transferred to the Iraqi people. The Iraqi Governing Council has appointed ministers who are responsible for the day-to-day operations of the Iraqi government. The Council has also begun the process that will lead to a new constitution. No friend or enemy should doubt Iraq liberty will find a lasting home.

Iraqis are a proud people, and they want their national independence. And they can see the difference between those who are attacking their country and those who are helping to build it. Our coalition is training new police; the terrorists are trying to kill them. We're protecting pipelines and powerplants for the good of the Iraqi people; the terrorists are trying to blow them up. We're turning authority over to Iraqi leaders; the terrorists are trying to assassinate them. We're offering aid and self-rule and hope for the future; the terrorists offer nothing but oppression and death. The vast majority of Iraqis know exactly what is going on in their country today. Having seen the worst of tyranny, the Iraqi people will reject the return of tyranny.

After decades of a dictator's sustained assault on Iraq's society and dignity and spirit, a Jeffersonian democracy will not spring up in a matter of months. We know that our Ba'athist and terrorist enemies are ruthless and cunning. We also know that the lives of Iraqis have improved greatly in 7 short months. Yet, we know the remaining tasks are difficult.

We also know a few things about our own country. America gained its own independence and helped free much of the world by taking on difficult tasks. We're a confident people, and we have a reason to be confident. Our Armed Forces are skilled and powerful and humane. They're the best in the world. I will keep them that way.

We've got good friends and allies serving with us in Iraq. There are 32 countries standing beside our troops. Our commanders have the capabilities they have requested, and they're meeting a changing enemy with flexible tactics. The Congress has provided the resources we need to support our military and to improve the daily lives of newly liberated people. Other nations and organizations have stepped up to provide more than \$18 billion to the emerging democracies of Afghanistan and Iraq. The peoples of those two countries are sacrificing for their own liberty. And the United States once again is fighting in the cause of our Nation, the great cause of liberty. And we know that the cause of liberty will prevail.

Much is asked of us, and we have answered this kind of challenge before. In the summer of 1948, the Soviet Union imposed a sudden and total blockade on the city of Berlin in order to force the allies out. More than 2 million people would soon be without food or fuel or medicine. The entire world watched and wondered if free peoples would back down, wondered whether free people would abandon their commitments. It was at the outset of the cold war, and the will and the resolve of America were being measured.

In an urgent meeting, all the alternatives were discussed, including retreat. When the moment of decision came, President Harry Truman said this: "We stay in Berlin, period. We stay in Berlin, come what may." By the determination of President Truman, America

and our allies launched the Berlin airlift and overcame more than 10 months of siege. That resolve and the daring of our military saved a city and held back the Communist threat in Europe.

Nearly four decades later, Ronald Reagan came to West Berlin with the same kind of resolve, and vision beyond the cold war. When he called on the Soviets to tear down that wall, he was asserting a confident new doctrine. He believed that communism can not only be contained but transcended, that no human barrier could hold back the spread of human liberty. The triumph of that vision eventually turned enemies into friends, healed a divided continent, and brought security and peace to Europe and America.

Two years into the war on terror, the will and resolve of America are being tested in Afghanistan and in Iraq. Again the world is watching. Again we will be steadfast. We will finish the mission we have begun, period.

We are not only containing the terrorist threat, we are turning it back. We believe that freedom is the right of every person. We believe that freedom is the hope of every culture. We believe that freedom is the future of every nation in the Middle East. And we know as Americans that the advance of freedom is the surest path to peace.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:16 p.m. at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to Edwin J. Feulner, president, The Heritage Foundation, and his wife, Linda Leventhal; former Attorney General Edwin Meese III; and former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq.

### **Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom To Secretary General Lord Robertson of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization**

*November 12, 2003*

Good morning. I'm proud to welcome members of the diplomatic corps and my administration, and of course Lord Robertson, the Secretary General of NATO, to the

White House. I've been honored to host Lord Robertson here at the White House many times over the past 3 years. I'm grateful that he's come once more before he leaves his post.

The Presidential Medal of Freedom is our Nation's highest civil award, given to individuals of exceptional merit and integrity. For Lord Robertson, it is a fitting tribute to his long and distinguished career of service to his nation, to our alliance, and to the world.

NATO is the most successful alliance in history, and Lord Robertson has led NATO during some of the most challenging years of its history. Not long ago, some questioned whether NATO could or should survive the end of the cold war. Then the Alliance proved its enduring worth by stopping ethnic cleansing in Bosnia and keeping the peace in Kosovo. Some wonder whether NATO could adapt to the new threats of the 21st century. Today, NATO forces are fighting terror in Afghanistan and supporting a multinational division in Iraq.

Today in Iraq, a member of NATO, Italy, lost some proud sons in the service of freedom and peace. The United States sends our deepest condolences to the families who died—of the soldiers and policemen who died. We appreciate their sacrifices. I appreciate the steadfast leadership of Prime Minister Berlusconi, who refuses to yield in the face of terror.

Lord Robertson is a patient leader. He's a determined leader, and over the past 4 years his skills and talents have made many achievements possible. Lord Robertson oversaw the largest expansion in NATO's history, a major milestone in the fulfillment of our shared vision of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. He helped open a new chapter in NATO's relationship with Russia through the creation of the Russian-NATO Council. He ensured that NATO would honor its commitment to come to the defense of fellow NATO member Turkey. And he pursued an ambitious agenda of transformation to make NATO forces lighter, faster, and better able to respond to complex and ever-changing threats.

America owes a special debt to Lord Robertson. When our Nation was attacked on September the 11th, 2001, Lord Robertson

led NATO to invoke, for the first time in its history, Article V, which states that an attack against one NATO Ally is an attack against all. Americans will never forget that vital support from our closest allies on one of the darkest days of our history.

Our alliance continues to face and to meet the threats to peace and prosperity and freedom. Lord Robertson's leadership has been crucial to meeting these challenges. His tenure at the helm of this institution shows the power of collective defense when free nations act to serve great causes and free nations act to produce results. Lord Robertson's efforts and vision leave behind a legacy of effective multilateralism that will benefit this Alliance for years to come.

When NATO was founded over half a century ago, President Harry Truman said this: "By this treaty, we are not only seeking to establish freedom, freedom from aggression and from the use of force in the North Atlantic community, but we're also actively striving to promote and preserve peace throughout the world." We honor Lord Robertson here today for his dedication to the high ideals of the NATO Alliance, the promise of peace throughout the world.

I'm going to ask the military aide now to read the honor. It is my honor to welcome this good man, to present the Medal of Freedom to the Right Honorable Lord Robertson of Port Ellen.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:54 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary General Lord Robertson.

### **Notice—Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran**

*November 12, 2003*

On November 14, 1979, by Executive Order 12170, the President declared a national emergency with respect to Iran pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701–1706) to deal with the unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy,

and economy of the United States constituted by the situation in Iran. Because our relations with Iran have not yet returned to normal, and the process of implementing the January 19, 1981, agreements with Iran is still underway, the national emergency declared on November 14, 1979, must continue in effect beyond November 14, 2003. Therefore, consistent with section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)), I am continuing for 1 year this national emergency with respect to Iran.

This notice shall be published in the *Federal Register* and transmitted to the Congress.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
November 12, 2003.

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 12:01 p.m., November 12, 2003]

NOTE: This notice was published in the *Federal Register* on November 13.

### **Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to Iran**

*November 12, 2003*

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. Consistent with this provision, I have sent the enclosed notice, stating that the Iran emergency declared by Executive Order 12170 on November 14, 1979, is to continue in effect beyond November 14, 2003, to the *Federal Register* for publication. The most recent notice continuing this emergency was published in the *Federal Register* on November 13, 2002 (67 *Fed. Reg.* 68929).

Our relations with Iran have not yet returned to normal, and the process of implementing the January 19, 1981, agreements with Iran is still underway. For these reasons,

I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared on November 14, 1979, with respect to Iran, beyond November 14, 2003.

**George W. Bush**

The White House,  
November 12, 2003.

### **Remarks Following a Meeting With Judicial Nominees and an Exchange With Reporters**

*November 13, 2003*

**The President.** I have the job of nominating people to serve on the Federal benches. I have handled my duty in the right way by picking superb men and women to serve our country as Federal judges, people of integrity and honor, people of high intelligence, three of whom are with me today. Carolyn Kuhl, Janice Brown, Priscilla Owen really represent the best of America—superb, superb women.

And yet, these three women are being denied a chance to serve on the bench because of ugly politics in the United States Senate. These folks deserve an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor. If they get an up-or-down vote on the Senate floor, they will be confirmed because the majority of justices believe they should serve. And yet a few Senators are playing politics. And it's wrong, and it's shameful, and it's hurting the system.

I have told these three ladies I will stand with them until the bitter end because they're the absolute right pick for their respective positions. And the Senators who are playing politics with their nominations are acting shamefully. And I want to thank you all for being such stalwarts for justice and fairness and decency, and I appreciate you standing here.

**Carolyn Kuhl.** Thank you, Mr. President.

**The President.** Let me answer a couple quick—please.

### **Iraq**

**Q.** Mr. President, could you tell us your ideas about how you would like to see—speed up the transfer of power in Iraq? Are you interested in setting up, for example, an

interim government before a constitution is written?

**The President.** What I'm interested in doing is working with Ambassador Bremer and the Governing Council to work on a plan that will encourage the Iraqis to assume more responsibility. Ambassador Bremer sat right here yesterday and talked to me about the Iraqis' desire to be more involved in the governance of their country. And that's a positive development because actually that's what we want. We want the Iraqis to be more involved in the governance of their country. And so Ambassador Bremer, with my instructions, is going back to talk to the Governing Council to develop a strategy. And he'll report back after he's consulted with the very people that we want to assume more responsibility.

Yes.

#### **Steel Tariffs**

**Q.** Mr. President—

**The President.** You're in there, Stretch [David Gregory, NBC News].

**Q.** What's your timetable for deciding on whether to lift the steel sanctions? And how far do you think the U.S. industry has gone now in restructuring toward—

**The President.** Well, that's exactly what I'm reviewing now. Part of the—the decision was based upon the International Trade Commission's finding that our industry had been harmed, and therefore, I imposed some tariffs in order to allow for a restructuring of the industry. I'm in the process of reviewing the extent to which the industry has been restructured. I'm going to make a decision within a reasonable period of time.

**Q.** Mr. President?

**The President.** Yes, Stretch.

**Q.** Thank you, sir.

**The President.** Excuse me, I couldn't tell if you wanted to ask a question or not today. [Laughter]

#### **Iraq**

**Q.** How worried—

**The President.** Is this about the judges?

**Q.** Yes, right.

**The President.** Okay.

**Q.** I would—if I had time, I would. What are you prepared to do about the fact and how worried are you about the fact that ordi-

nary Iraqis appear to be more irritated with the presence of U.S. troops and more supportive of Iraqi insurgents?

**The President.** Well, first of all, the goal of the terrorists, whether they be Ba'athists or mujahideen fighters or Al-Qaida-type fighters, is to create terror and fear amongst average Iraqis, is to create the conditions where people are just so fearful for their lives that they cannot think positively about freedom. That's their goal.

Our goal, of course, is to continue to work with those Iraqi citizens who understand that freedom is a precious commodity, those who understand that there is a hopeful life possible in a part of the world where a lot of hope has been diminished in the past. And that's the struggle—that's the struggle. And we're going to prevail because, well, one, we got a good strategy to deal with these killers. Two, I believe by far the vast majority of Iraqis do understand the stakes and do want their children to grow up in a peaceful environment and do want their children going to a school and do want to be able to live a free life that is prosperous. That's what I believe. And I—recently, I was told by—for example, Bremer was telling me about a survey done by an American firm in Baghdad, for example, and it said that by far the vast majority of people understand that if America were to leave and the terrorists were to prevail in their desire to drive us out, the country would fall into chaos. And no one wants that, and so I'm confident we'll prevail in the long run. And I'm confident we're doing good work right now.

Yes.

**Q.** Mr. President, are you—

#### **Judicial Nominations**

**The President.** Do you have a followup on the judges?

**Q.** Yes, well, the Democrats say they have confirmed 98 percent of your judges—

**The President.** Yes.

**Q.** —and by focusing on the few that they are opposing, that you're picking essentially an unfair fight.

**The President.** Well, our circuits—circuit courts remain, in some cases, dangerously vacant. And here are three cases where people are being treated unfairly. My question is,

why won't they give these three ladies an up-or-down vote? Where's the justice? These are eminently qualified people. These are three women who are—represent the best of American jurisprudence. And why won't they let them come to the floor? If they're so fair, bring them up to a vote—today. Let these three nominees get onto the floor of the United States Senate for an up-or-down vote, and then I will listen to whether or not they're fair or not.

Yes, last question, then I've got to go.

#### ***President's Upcoming Visit to the United Kingdom***

**Q.** Are you concerned, Mr. President, that the massive amount of protesters that are going to be in London next week will undercut your message of unity in Iraq?

**The President.** I am so pleased to be going to a country which says that people are allowed to express their mind. That's fantastic. You know, freedom is a beautiful thing. And the fact that people are willing to come out and express themselves says I'm going to a great country.

And secondly, I don't expect everybody in the world to agree with the positions I've taken. But certainly, those should agree with the goals of the United States, which is peace and freedom. You see, we believe that freedom is not America's gift to the world. We believe freedom is the Almighty's gift to everybody in the world. We believe free societies are peaceful societies. We believe in human justice and human dignity and human rights. We cry when we hear stories about people being tortured, women being raped in rape rooms. We weep when we discover mass graves of innocent Iraqis. We understand that tyranny is not the form of government that will bring hope and justice. And therefore, we're not only willing to defend our own security; we're also willing to defend the rights of others.

Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:30 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House, following a meeting with Carolyn Kuhl, nominee to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Ninth Circuit; Janice Brown, nominee to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the District of Columbia Circuit; and Priscilla Owen, nominee to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Fifth Circuit. In

his remarks, he referred to L. Paul Bremer III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq.

#### **Remarks at a Bush-Cheney Luncheon in Orlando, Florida**

*November 13, 2003*

**The President.** Thank you all. Thanks for coming. Thanks, Jeb—I mean, Governor. [Laughter] It's hard to get used to it. [Laughter] The thing I love about Jeb is he's a modest fellow. When the Florida Marlins won, he was trying to take credit for their success. [Laughter] I told him he doesn't have any idea what it takes to run a championship baseball team. [Laughter] He reminded me I don't either. [Laughter]

Love being back in Florida with our friends. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate your support a lot. It means a lot to me. Listen, the political season is going to come in its own time. I'm loosening up, and I'm getting ready. But I've got a job to do for everybody who lives in this country. And I'm going to continue doing that job. And as you work the phones and go to the coffee shops and houses of worship, I want you to remind the people that I'm going to work hard to keep America strong, to keep America secure. I'll work hard to make sure we're prosperous and free.

I regret one thing about this event, and that is Laura is not with me.

**Audience members.** Oh-h-h.

**The President.** I know it. I know it. [Laughter] You drew the short straw. [Laughter] She is a fabulous sister-in-law. She's a great wife, a wonderful mother, and she's doing a heck of a good job as the First Lady of this country. I'm really proud of her. She sends her very best to all our friends here in central Florida.

I'm proud of my brother. I tell you, he is a—he has been a superb Governor. He is a principled man, principled man. When he says something, you can book it. He is a man of his word. He is a courageous person, and he's got his priorities absolutely right. He loves his faith. He loves his family, and he loves his Florida.

I want to thank the other cast of characters who have joined me on this stage. That would be Tom Petway, Zach Zachariah, and David Brown, all of whom are working hard to make sure that this campaign is well-financed. I want to thank you for your hard work. I appreciate your efforts.

Mel Martinez is here today. He serves in my Cabinet. Where are you? There he is. Mel. He's done a superb job in my Government. You'll hear me talk a little bit about the homeownership gap a little later on. He's the leader in making sure that we promote ownership here in America. He is a—I love his story—it's the story of America, as far as I am concerned. As you know, Mel was a part of what they call Pedro Pan—Peter Pan. It's a program that—where Cuban moms and dads had the courage to send their children—I think Mel was 13 at the time—to send this teenager to America so that they could grow up in freedom. It speaks a lot about the mom and dad. It speaks a lot about the compassion of the American families who received the Mel Martinezes of the world. As well it speaks a lot about Mel and the other men and women who came from Cuba to flee to freedom. And Mel—it touches my heart to know that this man, who could have been living in repression and tyranny, is now in the Cabinet of the President of the United States.

I want to thank Congresswoman Katherine Harris and Congressman Tom Feeney for joining us today. Thank you all for coming. I appreciate my friend Bill McCollum, former Congressman from this part of the world, for being here. Thank you for coming, Bill.

I know we've got members of the statehouse here. You're probably standing by, waiting for your orders from Governor Bush on what to do next. [Laughter] Oh, yes, that's not the way it works. [Laughter]

The Lieutenant Governor, Toni Jennings, is here, and I want to thank Toni for coming. Charlie Crist is here. I appreciate Charlie for being here, the attorney general. We call him "General" now. [Laughter] Tom Gallagher is here. I appreciate both the statewide holders. I know State Senator Dan Webster is with us today. I want to thank you for coming, Dan.

I know my friend Rich Crotty is here, one of the co-chairmen of the event. But most of all, I want to thank you all for coming.

**Audience members.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** Well, Crotty—[laughter]—a couple of distant cousins leading the charge there. [Laughter] Finally, my friend Mercer Reynolds is with us, who is the national finance chairman for Bush-Cheney '04. He's from Cincinnati, Ohio. He's an entrepreneur and a business guy who has taken time out of his life to work hard, to encourage you all to participate. It looks like he as well as the Floridian leadership did a fabulous job. I'm proud you're here, and I thank you for coming.

Over the last 3 years, our Nation has acted decisively to confront great challenges. I came to this office to solve problems and not pass them on to future Presidents and future generations. I came to seize opportunities instead of letting them slip away. My administration is meeting the tests of our time.

Terrorists declared war on the United States of America, and war is what they got. We've captured or killed many of the key leaders of the Al Qaida network, and the rest of them know we're on their trail. In Afghanistan and in Iraq, we gave ultimatums to terror regimes. Those regimes chose defiance, and those regimes are no more. Fifty million people in those two countries once lived under tyranny, and today, they live in freedom.

Three years ago, our military was not receiving the resources it needed and morale was beginning to suffer, so we increased the defense budgets to prepare for the threats of a new era. And today, no one in the world can question the skill and the strength and the spirit of the United States military.

Three years ago, the economy was in trouble, and then recession was beginning. Then the attacks happened on our country. That affected economic growth. We had some scandals in corporate America. We marched to war in order to make America more secure and the world more peaceful. That all affected the way our people felt about the future, but we acted. We acted. We passed tough new laws to hold corporate criminals to account, and in order to get this economy going again, I have twice led the United



States Congress to pass historic tax relief for the American people.

I know that when Americans have more take-home pay to spend, to save, or invest, the whole economy grows, and people are more likely to find a job. We're returning more money to the people to help them raise their families, reducing taxes on dividends and capital gains to encourage investment. We're giving small businesses incentives to expand and to hire new people. With all these actions, we're laying the foundation for greater prosperity and more jobs across America, so every single citizen has a chance to realize the American Dream.

Today, the American economy is strong, and it is getting stronger. Third quarter growth in our economy was at the fastest pace in nearly 20 years. That's a good sign. People are finding more new jobs are being created. That's a good sign. Productivity is high. Business investment is rising. The housing construction is strong. The tax relief we passed is working. We left more money in the hands of the American people, and our economy is growing stronger.

Three years ago, there was a lot of talk about education reform, but the truth of the matter is, in Washington, there was not much action. So I acted. I called for and the Congress passed the No Child Left Behind Act. With a solid bipartisan majority, we delivered the most dramatic education reforms in a generation.

See, we believe in high standards. We're going to challenge the soft bigotry of low expectations. We believe every child can learn to read and write and add and subtract, and we expect every child to learn to read and write and add and subtract. We've increased the education budgets for Title I students. But for the first time, now the Federal Government is saying, "Show us some results." For the first time, we're saying the days of excuse-making are over. We expect results in every classroom so not one single child is left behind.

We reorganized our Government and created the Department of Homeland Security to better safeguard our ports and borders and better secure the American people. We passed trade promotion authority to open up markets for Florida's farmers and ranchers

and entrepreneurs. We passed budget agreements to maintain much-needed spending discipline in Washington, DC. On issue after issue, this administration has acted on principle, has kept its word, and has made progress for the American people.

The Congress gets a lot of credit for the progress we've made. I want to thank the Speaker, Denny Hastert, and Majority Leader Bill Frist for providing strong leadership. I want to thank the Members who are here. And you've got a great delegation from Florida with whom I've been able to work. I want to thank them for their hard work. See, what we're trying to do is to change the tone in Washington, DC. We're trying to get rid of all the needless politics and focus on the people's business, focus on results, and not the ugly process that sometimes takes on. We're making good progress. We really are.

And one of the reasons why this administration has been successful is because I've called upon people from all walks of life, people like Mel Martinez, to join our Government. I have put together a fantastic administration for the American people. Our country has had no finer Vice President than Dick Cheney.

**Audience member.** [Inaudible]

**The President.** Okay, I agree. Mother may have a second opinion. [Laughter]

In 3 years, we've come far, we've done a lot. But our work is only beginning. I've set great goals worthy of a great nation. First, America is committed to expanding the realm of freedom and peace for our own security and for the benefit of the world. And second, in our own country, we must work for a society of prosperity and compassion so that every citizen has a chance to work and to succeed and realize the great promise of America.

It is clear that the future of freedom and peace depend on the actions of America. This Nation is freedom's home and freedom's defender. We welcome this charge of history, and we are keeping it. The war on terror continues. The enemies of freedom are not idle, and neither are we. This country will not rest; we will not tire; we will not stop until this danger to civilization is removed.

We are confronting that danger in Iraq, the latest front in the war on terror. We're

confronting that danger where Saddam hold-outs and foreign terrorists are desperately trying to throw Iraq into chaos by attacking coalition forces and international aid workers and innocent Iraqi citizens. They know that the advance of freedom in Iraq would be a major defeat for the cause of terror. This collection of killers is trying to shake the will of America. America will not be intimidated.

We're aggressively striking the terrorists in Iraq, defeating them there so we will not have to face them in our own country. We're calling for other nations to help. You see, a free Iraq will make the whole world more secure. We're standing with the Iraqi people as they assume more of their own defense and as they move toward self-government.

These are not easy tasks, but they are essential tasks. We will finish what we have begun, and we will win this essential victory in the war on terror. Our greatest security comes from the advance of human liberty, because free nations do not support terror, free nations do not attack their neighbors, free nations do not threaten the world with weapons of mass terror.

Americans believe that freedom is the deepest need and hope of every human heart. I believe that freedom is the future of every nation. And I know that freedom is not America's gift to the world; freedom is God's gift to every man and woman who lives in the world.

We understand that unprecedented influence brings tremendous responsibilities. We have duties in this world, and when we see disease and starvation and hopeless poverty, we will not turn away. On the continent of Africa, America is leading the world. We are committed to bringing the healing power, the healing power of medicine to millions of men and women and children suffering with AIDS. This mighty, strong, powerful Nation is a compassionate nation. And I'm proud to say, we're doing everything we can in the important work of human rescue.

We've got challenges here at home, and we'll be equal to the challenges. We'll continue to push a pro-growth environment. I want people working. We'll continue to work on our economy until everybody who wants to work and is not working today can find a job.

We have a duty to keep our commitment to America's seniors by strengthening and modernizing Medicare. After years of debate and delay and deadlock, the Congress is nearing final passage of the biggest improvements in senior health care in nearly 40 years. We're on the verge of giving our seniors prescription drug coverage, expanded coverage for preventive medicine and therapies, more health care choices. Members of Congress have supported these Medicare reforms with their words. Now it is time to support these reforms with their votes. The House and the Senate must quickly reconcile their differences and send me a bill. We need to give our seniors a modern Medicare system before the year is out.

And for the sake of our health care system, we need to cut down on the frivolous lawsuits which increase the cost of medicine. I appreciate Jeb's leadership on this important issue, and it's an important issue. If you've been harmed by a bad doctor, you deserve your day in court. Systems shouldn't reward lawyers who are simply fishing for a rich settlement. Jeb's taken on this issue, and so have I. And the reason I have is because frivolous lawsuits drive up the cost of health care, and they therefore affect the Federal budget. Medical liability reform is a national issue that requires a national solution.

I put out a good proposal. It was passed by the House of Representatives. It is stuck in the United States Senate. It is important for those Senators who are preventing this bill from going forward to understand that nobody has ever been healed by a frivolous lawsuit.

I have a responsibility as the President to make sure the judicial system runs well, and I met that duty. I've nominated superb men and women for the Federal courts, people who will interpret the law, not legislate from the bench. Today I met with three superb women in the Oval Office before I got on the airplane to come to Florida, three fantastic nominees, people who will represent their judiciary with class and distinction and integrity. Yet, their nominations are being held up. They can't get a vote on the floor. I call upon the Florida Senators to let these three women get a vote on the floor of the

United States Senate. Every nominee deserves a fair hearing and an up-or-down vote. It's time for Members of the United States Senate to stop playing politics with American justice.

This country needs a comprehensive energy plan. We must promote energy efficiency and conservation and develop clean technologies to help us explore in environmentally sensible ways for energy. For the sake of economic security and for the sake of national security, this Nation must become less dependent on foreign sources of energy. They passed a bill out of the House. They passed a bill out of the Senate. They need to reconcile their differences and get the energy plan to my desk before they go home this Christmas.

A strong and prosperous nation must also be a compassionate nation. I'm going to continue to advance our agenda of compassionate conservatism, which means we will apply the most effective, innovative techniques and ideas to help fellow citizens who hurt. There's still a lot of people in our country, millions of men and women who want to end their dependence on Government and become independent through hard work. We've got a bill on the success of welfare reform to bring work and dignity into the lives of more of our citizens.

Congress needs to complete the "Citizen Service Act" so that more Americans can serve their communities and their country. Both Houses should reach agreement on my Faith-Based Initiative to support the armies of compassion, the soldiers of which are mentoring children, caring for the homeless, offering hope to the addicted. Government can hand out money, but it cannot put hope in people's hearts. This country is strong because we're a country of all faiths, we welcome all faiths. And our Government should not fear the positive influence of faith when it comes to the help of healing broken hearts.

A compassionate society must promote opportunity for all, including the independence and dignity that come from owning something, from ownership. This administration will constantly strive to promote an ownership society in America. We want more people owning their own home. There is a minority homeownership gap in America that

must be closed. Mel and I have developed a plan to close that gap. I've submitted elements of the plan to the United States Congress.

We want more people owning and managing their own health care plans. We want more people owning and managing their own retirement accounts. We want more people owning their own small business. This administration understands that when a person owns something, he or she has a vital stake in the future of our country.

A compassionate society—in a compassionate society, people respect one another, and they take responsibility for the decisions they make in life. The culture of America is changing from one that has said, "If it feels good, do it," and "If you've got a problem, blame somebody else," to a culture in which each of us understands we're responsible for the decisions we make in life. If you're fortunate enough to be a mom or a dad, you're responsible for loving your child with all your heart. If you're worried about the quality of the education in the community in which you live, you're responsible for doing something about it. If you're a CEO in corporate America, you're responsible for telling the truth to your shareholders and your employees. And in a responsibility society, each of us is responsible for loving our neighbor just like we'd like to be loved ourself.

I said the culture is changing, and the culture of service is growing. I started what's called the USA Freedom Corps to give Americans a chance to participate in making their communities and cities and neighborhoods better, and the response has been fantastic. Our charities are strong. Neighborhood healers are active all across America. Our policemen and firefighters and people who wear our Nation's uniform remind us on a daily basis what it means to sacrifice for something greater than yourself. Once again, the children of America believe in heroes, because they see them every day.

In these challenging times, the world has seen the resolve and the courage of the American people. I've been privileged to see the compassion and character of the American people. All the tests of the last years have come to the right Nation. We're a strong country, and we use our strength to

defend the peace. We're an optimistic country, confident in ourselves and in ideals bigger than ourselves.

Abroad, we seek to lift whole nations by spreading freedom. At home, we seek to lift up lives by spreading opportunity to every corner of America. This is the work that history has set before us. We welcome it, and we know that for our country, the best days lie ahead.

May God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:09 p.m. at Disney's Grand Floridian Resort and Spa. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; Tom Petway III and Zach Zachariah, Florida State finance cochairmen, Bush-Cheney '04, Inc.; and Tom Gallagher, chief financial officer, Florida Department of Financial Services. He also referred to Title I of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law No. 103-382), which amended Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Public Law No. 89-10).

### **Remarks at the Engelwood Neighborhood Center in Orlando**

*November 13, 2003*

Thanks for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. I want to thank the Engelwood Neighborhood Center for hosting us. *[Applause]* You're awfully kind to have us. Behave yourself. *[Laughter]* I wish I had time for a workout. I saw your facilities. *[Laughter]* One good way to help people maintain their health is to encourage people to exercise. And I want to thank those of you who are encouraging people of all ages to get a little exercise on a daily basis. The best way to make sure your health is strong is to prevent disease in the first place. Nothing like going out for a good stroll to keep yourself healthy.

I also want to thank our friends in my administration and the seniors who are participating in the discussions in Denver, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Cleveland, and Dallas. I notice that Surgeon General Carmona is hosting an event on the SMU campus. That kind of warms my heart, because First Lady Laura Bush went to SMU. I don't know if they still remember her there—*[laughter]*—but I cer-

tainly remember her here. *[Laughter]* And she sends her very best.

I want to thank you all for being here at what I would call an historic time when it comes to the health of our seniors, because I believe, with hard work and the right focus and with your help, we can reform Medicare. We can reform Medicare for the benefit of people who are on Medicare, and we can reform Medicare for those of us who are soon to be on Medicare. We have an obligation in this country. After years of debate and deadlock and delay, both Houses of Congress are nearing final passage of the biggest improvements in senior health care in 40 years. We're on the verge of giving seniors prescription drug coverage, expanded coverage for preventative maintenance medicine and therapy, and more health care choices.

Members of Congress say they support these Medicare reforms. Now it's time for a final vote. Members of Congress must resolve their remaining differences. The House and the Senate must resolve their differences and get a bill to me. For the sake of America's seniors, I call on the United States Congress to get the job done.

I appreciate Josefina's service to our Nation. As you know, she's the Assistant Secretary for Aging, U.S. Department of Health. Her boss, Tommy Thompson, a former Governor of Wisconsin, Cabinet Secretary, is now—has been on the Hill today working out the differences between the House and the Senate. He is intricately involved in making sure we get us a good Medicare bill.

I want to thank my brother, the Governor of this great State, who cares. He's got the right priorities. I know his priorities because we were both raised by the same mother. *[Laughter]* By the way, she wants there to be a modern Medicare system. *[Laughter]* But Jeb prioritizes his faith and his family and the people of Florida. He cares deeply about the people here. I'm proud of his leadership. They may say I'm not very objective, but he's a great Governor.

I'm honored that five distinguished Members of the United States House of Representatives have joined us here for this discussion. They are people who are going to help make the decision. I view them as allies in this important issue as well as allies in

helping us keep the peace around the world. They are Congressman Ric Keller, Congressman John Mica, Congressman Adam Putnam, Congressman Katherine Harris, and Congressman—Congresswoman Katherine Harris, and Congressman Tom Feeney. I'm honored you all are here.

I appreciate so very much your interest in this issue. I want to thank you for working with us. It's a tough issue. It's a tough issue because it's a complex issue, but modernizing Medicare is the right thing to do. We must not miss this opportunity. I ask the Members to go back and take—share the passion that not only I share—have but the others in the audience have about those of us in Washington doing our duty, doing what we're called to do, and that is to tackle tough issues and lead.

I want to thank Rhonda Medows, who is the secretary of the Agency of Health Care Administration. Rhonda, thank you for coming. I want to thank Terry White for being here. It's good to see you again, Terry. He's the secretary of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs. They know what I'm talking about, for the need for us to have a modern Medicare system. You know more than they know, because you live on Medicare; you understand the system needs to be changed and modernized.

I want to thank the mayor of Orlando, Buddy Dyer, for coming. Mr. Mayor, I'm honored you're here. Thank you for taking time. I appreciate Rich Crotty, who is the chairman of Orange County, for being here as well. Thank you, Rich, for coming. I appreciate the interest of Federal, State, and local officials in this very important subject.

I want to thank—I just came from what they call a roundtable discussion. Generally we have roundtable discussions sitting at square tables. *[Laughter]* You know how Government works. *[Laughter]* Jeb and I met with Estelle Baker and Loretta De Maintenon; the MacDonalds, Marge and Mac; and Beverly and Dick Allred. The reason we did is because we want to hear firsthand their stories. I'll share some of their stories with you. But you know, there's nobody—the best people to share with us the need to modernize Medicare are those who rely on Medicare. And they're able to tell

the good news about Medicare and the bad news about Medicare, what works in Medicare and what doesn't work in Medicare. Both of us like to listen to people who have had firsthand experiences, and I want to thank the meeting participants for sharing their stories with us.

Today when I landed—at your fantastic airport, by the way—I met Tillie—*[applause]*. Crotty, that's a good sign when people clap when I mention the airport. *[Laughter]* I met a very interesting woman named Tillie Walther. Tillie is here. Tillie is a volunteer for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program. It's called RSVP. She dedicates a lot of time to help other people.

The reason I bring up Tillie is that when people focus on America, they think about our great military might, and I'll keep our military mighty. They think about our pocketbooks; we're working hard to make sure they're full. The truth of the matter is, the great strength of our country is the heart and souls of our citizens, people who are willing to take time out of their day to make somebody else's life better. And Tillie is such a person. She's leading by example. I love her spirit. I love the example she sets. My call to people here and around our country is to love your neighbor just like you'd like to be loved yourself. Find a way to help somebody in need. Find a way to help somebody who hurts, and the country will be better off. Thank you, Tillie. Thanks for coming. I'm really, really honored you're here.

Many seniors depend upon Medicare. That's what we're here to talk about. And the Medicare program is a basic trust that must be upheld throughout the generations. Our Government has made a commitment to our seniors—the Federal Government has made a commitment to our seniors through the Medicare program. We made a commitment to provide good health care for seniors, and we must uphold that commitment.

Each of the seniors that I talked to today understands that Medicare needs to be modernized. It needs to be changed. It needs to be brought into the 21st century. They all want the Medicare system that allows them to pick the health care coverage that best meets their needs. And I want to share with you some of the thoughts that we had.

Marge and Mac MacDonald, they take seven different medications at a cost of about \$300 a month, and they have no prescription drug coverage. That is not exactly how the planners of Medicare envisioned a senior spending their years of retirement. That's expensive. It's costly. Marge says she's frustrated that Washington has not delivered a prescription drug benefit under Medicare. She says, "I'm tired of the talk." This is her words, not mine. "I'm tired of the talk. Sooner or later, somebody needs to do something. What is the point of retiring at all if you're going to worry about whether you have the money you need to survive?" Marge is right. We've had plenty of talk in Washington. We've debated this issue for a long time. Now is the time for action.

Estelle Baker—I mentioned Estelle earlier—she, in addition to her Medicare benefits, she has drug coverage through a supplemental insurance policy. Perhaps some of you all have the same type of arrangement. She said it's time for all seniors to have that kind of coverage. She said, "Seniors should have the same kind of safety net—some kind of safety net, and it should be done as soon as possible." In other words, that—what you're hearing from people is that when people retire, they don't want to have to worry. They've been worrying, probably raising their kids and worrying about their jobs and worrying about this and worrying about that. We don't want our seniors worrying about a health care system that is not meeting their needs.

Every senior I've talked to is grateful about the Medicare system, and it's done a lot. In many ways, it's fulfilled the promise, up until recent history, and therefore the system needs to be undated. That's what we're here to discuss. That's what Congress must hear. They must hear your voice that the system needs to be updated, that while the system has worked, we can do a better job.

Remember, Medicare was created at a time when medicine consisted mostly of house calls and surgery and long hospital stays. That was the nature of medicine when Medicare was created, and therefore the Medicare system responded to that. Now modern medicine includes preventative care, outpatient procedures, at-home care, and mi-

raculous new prescription drugs. Medicine has changed; Medicare hasn't.

Three-quarters of seniors have some kind of drug coverage, and that's positive news. Yet seniors relying exclusively on Medicare do not have coverage for prescription drugs—for most prescription drugs and for many forms of preventative care. That needs to be fixed. This is not good medicine. It's not cost-effective. Medicare needs to change.

For example, Medicare will pay—I want you to hear this example. Medicare will pay for extended hospital stays for ulcer surgery, at the cost of about \$28,000 per patient. That's important coverage, particularly if you have an ulcer. Yet, Medicare will not pay for the drugs that eliminate the cause of most ulcers, drugs that cost about \$500 a year—willing to pay the \$28,000 for the hospital stay but not the \$500 to try to keep the person out of the hospital in the first place. To me, that says we've got a system that needs to be updated and modernized. It's not enough for Medicare to pay to treat our seniors after they get sick. Medicare should be covering the medications that will be keeping our seniors from getting sick in the first place.

The best way to provide our seniors with modern medicine, including prescription drug coverage and better preventative care, is to give them better choices under Medicare. If seniors have choices, health care plans will compete for their business by offering better coverage at affordable prices. That's a fact. With greater choice, we can give American seniors the very best of modern medicine.

It's very important for people on Medicare to know that one of the choices that I strongly support and Members of Congress support is allowing people to remain in traditional Medicare programs. We fully understand that some seniors simply do not want to change, and that's understandable. In any system, modernization must say to the seniors, "If you're happy where you are, you stay there." If you're a senior who wants to stay in Medicare and you're concerned about prescription drugs, you should be able to get a Medicare-approved prescription drug coverage. That's what the bill says. And that's what we want to happen: There's no reason

for you to leave Medicare and that the Medicare system needs to be modernized to include prescription drugs.

If you're a senior who wants enhanced benefits, something a little different, something better, something that meets your particular needs, such as a new Medicare-approved private plan that includes a drug benefit along with other options, coverage for extended hospital stays or protection against high out-of-pocket expenses, you should have that choice as well. In other words, there are—a variety of choices ought to be available for seniors. If you like managed care plans, if you're happy with that, that option ought to be available. And if you're a low-income senior without much savings, you will receive extra help each month and more generous coverage so you can afford a Medicare option that includes prescription drug benefits.

That's the reform in front of Congress. It's moving forward. We've just got to make sure it moves forward to completion. That's what we're here to discuss today. In Medicare reform, we're applying this basic principle: Seniors should get to choose the kind of coverage that works best for them, instead of having that choice made solely by the Government. You see, every Member of Congress gets to choose a health care plan that makes the most sense for them, and the same for Federal employees. If choice is good for Members of the Congress, then choice is good for America's seniors.

For seniors without any drug coverage now, the reforms will make a big difference in their lives. In return for a monthly premium of about \$35, or \$1 a day, most seniors now without coverage will see their drug bills cut roughly in half. A senior who has no drug coverage now and a monthly drug cost of \$200 would save more than \$1,700 on drug costs each year. A senior with monthly drug costs of \$800 would save nearly \$5,900 on drug costs each year.

Putting improvements into place are going to take some time, and so we need to give seniors some immediate savings. We'll provide all seniors with a Medicare-approved drug discount card that would save between 10 to 25 percent off the cost of their medicines. So in other words, when the bill—as

the bill—when it passes, and I'm an optimist—particularly with your help, I will even be more optimistic—that in the time the bill transitions between the old system and the new system, there will be a Medicare-approved drug discount card for you. Low-income beneficiaries will receive an annual \$600 subsidy, along with their discount card, to help them purchase their prescription medicines.

And the legislation that Congress passes must make sure that the prescription drug coverage provided to many retirees by their employers is not undermined. We don't want the system to undermine some of the really good plans that you may have received as a result of your previous employer. Medicare legislation should encourage employers to continue the benefits, while also extending drug coverage to the millions of Medicare beneficiaries who now lack it.

Congress should also make sure that Medicare rests on solid accounting. The current Medicare system accounting does not always give a clear indication of its long-term financial health. I support the Medicare system that alerts future Congresses and Presidents when Medicare's costs are rising faster than expected, so they can address the problem. The accounting safeguard that we're working on in the bill will help Medicare stand on a strong financial foundation. We owe that to the taxpayers of our country.

The important thing we're talking about here is, not only will the steps we're taking strengthen Medicare for today's seniors but also for tomorrow's retirees. It seems to be a popular thought with the baby boomers. Many workers are counting on Medicare to provide good health care coverage in their retirement. These reforms will give our workers confidence that Medicare will serve them with the very best of modern medicine, and that's important for people to know. The budget I submitted earlier this year commits an additional \$400 billion over 10 years to implement this vision of a stronger Medicare system. This is enough to meet our commitments to the seniors today and to future generations of Americans.

I urge the seniors and all Americans to speak up and to call or write your Representatives or Senators and urge them to get a

final bill that meets the goal I just outlined. You need to speak up for prescription drug coverage. You need to speak up for health care choices. You need to speak up for a modern Medicare system that puts patients and doctors in charge. For years, our seniors have been calling for a prescription drug benefit. For years, American seniors have been calling for more choices in their health care coverage, and now we'll see who is really listening in Washington, DC.

The choice is simple: Either we will have more debate, more delay, and more deadlock, or we'll make real progress. I made my choice. I want real progress, and I urge the Congress to take the path of progress and give our seniors a modern Medicare system. We've come far. Let's finish the job.

Thank you for coming. God bless.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:07 p.m. In his remarks, he referred to Surgeon General Richard Carmona; Josefina Carbonell, Assistant Secretary for Aging, Department of Health and Human Services; Gov. Jeb Bush of Florida; and Rich T. Crotty, chairman, Orange County Governing Board. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### Remarks Prior to Discussions With President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi of Italy and an Exchange With Reporters

November 14, 2003

**President Bush.** Thank you all for coming. Mr. President, it is my honor to welcome you to the Oval Office. You come at a difficult period for your country. You come at a time when your nation grieves for the brave sons who lost their life. I send our Nation's gratitude and prayers to the loved ones who are grieving today in Italy.

I want to thank you for the friendship between our two nations. I want to thank you for your strong leadership in standing up to the terrorists who are trying to create fear and chaos. And I want to thank you for your understanding that a free and peaceful Iraq will help make the entire world more peaceful.

And so it is my privilege and honor to welcome a close friend to the Oval Office. Welcome.

**President Ciampi.** Today I come to the United States as President of the Italian Republic and as a staunch advocate of European integration. I will go to Arlington Cemetery this afternoon. No Italian, no European can ever forget how much democratic Europe owes to the young Americans who gave their lives for our freedom. On Sunday I will go to Ground Zero to honor the victims of terrorism.

**President Bush.** Thank you.

**President Ciampi.** I want to thank President Bush for his words, for expressing solidarity in connection with the horrible attack against Italian forces in Iraq. Italy went to Iraq not to take part in a war but to contribute to rebuild a country. This is the identity of the Italian Republic, to build peace, to solve post-conflict situations. We have done it in the past, and we do it in many parts of the world today.

With President Bush, we agreed on the goal to accelerate full implementation of United Nations Resolution 1511. We support the idea of drawing a roadmap for the Iraqi political process in order to establish a full-fledged Government.

The ideals of democracy and freedom have their roots and their strongest foundation in Europe and North America. As it happens, even among friends, there have been problems between us on specific aspects of transatlantic cooperation. We are committed, especially us Italians, to put them fully behind us, for they do not dent and cannot dent the—[inaudible]—solidarity between Europe and the United States. Upholding Atlantic cohesion is a duty and a necessity.

I already mentioned to President Bush, and we will continue to do so during the working lunch, about the rationale of what the European Union wants to do to become more united and speak with a single voice. We are progressing in bringing about and completing a constitutional treaty which will enable the European Union to function better and, again, to speak with a single voice.

A united, stronger—with a new configuration of Europe, it will be a stronger Europe with 25 member states and over 450 million



citizens and will reinforce and extend a vast area of security and peace. And they will become a better partner also for the United States.

I intend to continue my conversation with President Bush so that we can work together, United States, Italy, Europe, to reinforce pressures to bring about a solution to the conflict of Israel and Palestinian problems, so that we can arrive to a right and just solution. And this will help us to fight, better, terrorism. And we have to fight terrorists—terrorism in a better way so that the Islamic world will know that we view them as a civilization both near and friendly to ours.

In conclusion, I think that we should reinforce our action to increase the actions also within the international institutions, such as the United Nations, to whose establishment the United States has made a fundamental contribution. Italy will continue to fight, with determination, terrorists.

**President Bush.** Thank you. Listen, we'll have a couple of questions here. We'll alternate between the American press and the Italian press. We expect there to be some order here during the question-and-answer period. In order to set the example, Jennifer [Jennifer Loven, Associated Press], would you like to begin in a calm and rational way?

#### **Coalition Goals and Tactics in Iraq**

**Q.** I would. With the speeding up of the transfer of power in Iraq, do you envision that meaning a quicker reduction of U.S. forces there?

**President Bush.** Well, we are—I instructed Ambassador Bremer to take—to go back to Iraq with the instructions that we will work with the Governing Council to speed up the political process in a rational way. That's what he's going to do, on the belief that we've made a lot of progress on the ground, that the Governing Council is better prepared to take more responsibility.

In terms of security, we will do whatever it takes to help Iraq develop into a free and peaceful country. That is our goal. And we will stay there until the job is done, and then we'll leave. And the enemy has changed tactics on the ground, and so we're changing our response, and that's what you're beginning to see now. The discussions with Gen-

eral Abizaid and the discussions with Bremer and all the different pieces of evidence to that effect are really saying that as the enemy changes, so will we. And we'll bring them to justice, and Iraq will be more secure, and Iraq is going to be free. And that's in the Nation's interest that it be so.

Would you like to call on an Italian member of the press? There is traveling press from Italy, isn't there? Would anybody care to ask a question?

It's the old double-question trick.

**Q.** It's a question to both you, President Bush, and President Ciampi. Italy is going through very difficult times, as it is the case for other countries who are present in Iraq. And so the question is, will the presence of U.S. and Italian troops in Iraq change their strategy in order to respond to the deterioration of the situation?

**President Bush.** That's a very good question. I'll go first, if you don't mind. The answer to your question is yes. It's very important that our commanders on the ground be given flexibility to be able to adjust tactics to an enemy that is changing its tactics. First of all, the enemy wants to create the condition of fear. They want people to fear them. They will lose that aspect of the battle because our will will remain strong.

And secondly, we must use more Iraqis to gather intelligence and to be on the front-line of securing their own country. And that's exactly what we're doing.

And third, when we find actionable intelligence, we will strike fast to bring killers to justice. And that's what we're doing as well.

**President Ciampi.** I only want to add a few words, and this concerns exclusively tactical maneuvers that have to be decided by the commanders who are on the field, onsite. Our military forces received specific and very clear instructions when they went to Iraq. The implementation of these instructions stem from the assessment of their commanders on the field.

**President Bush.** Yes, very good. Steve [Steve Holland, Reuters]. Yes, sorry.

**Q.** Can you envision pulling U.S. troops out of Iraq before Saddam Hussein is found?

**President Bush.** Look, we will stay until the job is done, and the job is for Iraq to

be free and peaceful. A free and peaceful Iraq will have historic consequences. And we'll find Saddam Hussein. The goal is for a free and peaceful Iraq, and by being strong and determined, we will achieve that objective.

Final question here. I promised the President I would buy him lunch, and if we keep answering questions, we won't be able to eat lunch.

**President Ciampi.** I have nothing else to add.

**President Bush.** Okay.  
Sir, please.

### **Humanitarian Aid Workers in Iraq**

**Q.** I have a question to President Bush. Given the difficult security situation in the country and given the fact that the Red Cross left the country, what can be done to ensure and guarantee the protection of the return of the Red Cross and also of other humanitarian organizations?

**President Bush.** Yes, that's an excellent question. Thank you for asking that. First, there are Red Cross workers still there. The headquarters left Baghdad, but many workers are still there. Secondly, there are—besides the Red Cross, there are other organizations still in place that are delivering the humanitarian help that is needed to help Iraq rebuild herself.

It is very important for the leaders of the NGOs to recognize that if they don't go into Baghdad, they're doing exactly what the terrorists want them to do. The situation on the ground for the Iraqi citizens, the humanitarian situation, is improving, and the main reason why is because there are ministries up and running, staffed by very capable Iraqi citizens.

We will stay the course, and as more and more Iraqis realize freedom is precious and freedom is a beautiful way of life, they will assume more and more responsibilities, not only for security but for humanitarian reasons as well.

Finally, I want to thank the Italian people once again for working toward a world that is more humane and more decent and more peaceful. The Iraqi people deserve to live a life of freedom. The Iraqi people deserve to have their children go to schools. The Iraqi

people deserve to be free of torture chambers and mass graves. And the work we are doing together is humane and compassionate and necessary for peace, and I thank the people of Italy.

Thank you all.

**President Ciampi.** I just want to add that the Italian Red Cross is still in Iraq, and they're still carrying out their duties, and they're giving assistance to the people who is really in need of assistance.

**President Bush.** All right. We've got to go eat. I hope you do too.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:55 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to L. Paul Bremer III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq; and Gen. John P. Abizaid, USA, combatant commander, U.S. Central Command. President Ciampi spoke in Italian, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter.

### **Interview With British Journalists**

*November 14, 2003*

#### **The Oval Office**

**The President.** I wanted to show you this shrine to democracy here, kind of give you a sense of who I am.

Laura designed that—that would be my wife. I wanted people to, when they walk in here, to have a sense of optimism. I wanted people to say, "The person whose office is in here, or who works in here, is an optimistic person." And I thought she did a fabulous job capturing my sense about our future.

Well, as you can see, it's got sun rays.

**Q.** Has it worked? Have people coming in—

**The President.** See, that's what you're supposed to tell me. [Laughter]

**Q.** Can we—[inaudible]—the enemy to you? [Laughter]

**The President.** I don't ask everybody that comes in to work. I just want you to know why we do what we do with the rug. This looks like Texas; it's a Texas star. These are paintings of Texas. This is a guy named Onderdonk, a great Texas painter. That's what our ranch looks like. That's west Texas, where—far west Texas. Where I was raised, it's flatter than that. Laura's mother was

raised in that country. It's a really special part of the room.

**Q.** Is that actually the ranch?

**The President.** No, it's not. It looks like it—two other Texas paintings. Obviously, I love Texas. It's very important for a President to know who he is before you take this job, a lot of pressure here, a lot of decision-making. If you try to figure out who you are on the job—

**Q.** It's too late.

**The President.** —you're not doing a very good job. Exactly. Before I get to there—well, Washington, George Washington, of course. It's kind of hard to envision Rutherford B. Hayes above the mantel, isn't it?

Anyway, Lincoln is this country's greatest President, so I put him on the wall. I think he was the greatest President, because the job of President is to unite the country to achieve big objectives. It's hard to achieve big things if you're not united. We're achieving freedom and peace, so we'll spend a little time talking about it—Iraq.

At home, a compassionate America is a big objective. In order to do that, a President must call upon people to serve their neighbors in need. I understand the limits of government when it comes to compassion. The truth of the matter is, the great strength of our country is the heart and souls of our citizens, incredibly passionate people here. My job is to call them to, as I like to put it, to love their neighbor like they would like to be loved themselves, which leads to this painting here.

It's called "A Charge to Keep." It's based upon a Methodist hymn. As you know, there was a renegade Englishman named John Wesley, and we are Methodists—at least, I am Methodist, and my wife is a Methodist. And we sang this hymn at my first inaugural church service as Governor. And my friend O'Neill, who is not a Methodist—he introduced Laura and me in their backyard in Midland—he said, "I've got a painting based upon that hymn, and would you like to hang it in the Governor's office?" I said, "I don't think it's going to fit." It turned out to be perfect.

The hymn talks about serving something greater than yourself in life. Personally it

speaks to my spirituality. But my job as the President is not to promote a religion. My job is to capture what I call the spirit of America, to call upon people to serve, and that painting reminds me of that.

**Q.** What painting is it again?

**The President.** Pardon me?

**Q.** What's it called?

**The President.** "A Charge to Keep I Have."

**Q.** Is that possible—

**The President.** I think it is, yes. This, by the way—now we're going to get to the—this is the beginning. I hope you're recording all this.

**Q.** Can we go again? [Laughter]

### **The Resolute Desk/Churchill Bust**

**The President.** This desk was given to America by Queen Victoria. By the way, I would like to talk about two things here in the Oval Office, two articles, one the desk and one a bust, that should describe how I value the relationship with our close and unique friend, which is why I'm so grateful that I've been invited to go. You're about to get the preamble to the discussions.

This desk is called the H.M.S. *Resolute* Desk. The timber is from the H.M.S. *Resolute*, which was rescued in the Arctic, and Queen Victoria, out of gratitude for the relationship, made this desk from the timber. It's a beautiful desk. Not every President has used this.

It has some interesting features. Roosevelt put the door on the desk to cover up his infirmities. He didn't want people to know he was in a wheelchair. John-John Kennedy put his head out of the desk, probably the most famous Oval Office photo. His dad was looking out at the South Lawn there. Reagan put the bottom on the desk so his knees wouldn't hit. So it's been an interesting history. I love it.

**Q.** What are you going to do to it?

**The President.** I don't know. Good question. I'm just going to treat it like a treasure, which is what it is.

**Q.** Does this mean we're forgiven for burning down the White House? [Laughter]

**The President.** Well, that's another part of the White House. This was built after that tragic occurrence. As a matter of fact, there's

a painting hanging in there that we love to show people, where Dolly Madison cut out the picture of George Washington, rolled it up, and ran with it before the White House burned, thanks to a savage attack. [Laughter]

**Q.** It was all a mistake.

**The President.** Of course it was.

**Q.** Identification problem.

**The President.** Yes, exactly. Weren't sure where they were. This is, of course, Churchill. Tony Blair knew that I was an admirer of Churchill, and he arranged for this bust to be loaned here. I am an admirer. I thought Churchill was a clear thinker. I thought he was a—the kind of guy that stood tough when you needed to stand tough. He represented values that both countries hold dear, the value of freedom, the belief in democracy, human dignity of every person. I admired his wit. I wish I could be as witty as he was, because he had a fantastic mind and a charming guy.

And there's some interesting political lessons there. Sometimes you're up. Sometimes you're down. But you've got to do what you think is right. And that's the lesson of Winston Churchill, who was a strong leader.

So anyway, he sits here, along with Lincoln and Ike.

All right. So welcome to the Oval Office.

**Q.** Thank you very much.

#### ***President's Upcoming Visit to the United Kingdom***

**The President.** The President must understand in this office that the person is never bigger than the office. If you think you're bigger than the office, you'll fail as President. The Presidency is bigger than the person. It will last—stay here a lot longer than any individual. That's an important lesson here that Presidents must understand. Come on in.

Just a couple of comments, then we'll answer questions for a while. I am looking forward to the trip. It's going to be a really interesting and fun experience for Laura and me. Obviously, staying at Buckingham Palace is going to be an historic moment. I never dreamt when I was living in Midland, Texas, that I would be staying in Buckingham Palace. Buckingham Palace has got a resonance to it here in America which is pretty grand

and pretty magnificent. I've been looking forward to it.

I'm really looking forward to spending time with my friend—and I emphasize “my friend”—Tony Blair. He's a smart, capable, trustworthy friend, and we've got a lot to talk about. We'll talk about Iraq. We'll talk about trade. We'll talk about commerce. We'll talk about issues that we can work together on to help human suffering.

I'll be doing different events. I'll be giving a speech there that I'm working on now, that will confirm my understanding of the importance of this relationship. But I'll talk about other ambitions that we can work on together to promote freedom and peace and a compassion agenda that I think our countries are uniquely suited to work on.

So I'm looking forward to it. It's going to be an exciting trip for us, and I really thank Her Majesty for opening the invitation. I've got my tails all set out and ready to go. [Laughter] Had to rent them, but—[laughter]—just don't tell anybody.

**Q.** It gets a bit noisy in the palace when the morning papers arrive, so you'll need to—

**The President.** They do? Yes. I guess I'll have to go to bed early and wake up early. Anyway, let's go around while we've got time.

#### ***President's Upcoming Meeting With Families of Fallen British Soldiers***

**Q.** May I just begin by asking what you hope to take away from the visit? And in particular, can I ask you what message you will have for families of the British servicemen who have been killed in Iraq?

**The President.** Sure.

**Q.** Because I gather you'll get to meet.

**The President.** I am going to meet some. Look, there's two messages. One, the prayers of the American people and the prayers of the President are with them as they suffer. I believe in prayer. I believe that there is a comforting and healing Almighty, and I'll ask that their souls be comforted.

Secondly, that I will tell them that their loved one did not die vain. The actions we have taken will make the world more secure and the world more peaceful in the long run, that a free Iraq, free of weapons of mass destruction, free of tyranny, is not only good for the long-suffering Iraqi people, which in

itself is important, but is going to be good for the long-term for countries which love freedom. Can you imagine the historic change, the landmark moment that is taking place now, where we've got a free—a country which is emerging to be free and peaceful in the midst of a part of the world where violence and tyranny and terror have reigned?

And I view this as an historic moment, and I will share with them, just like I share with our own families here, a deep grief, my sorrow for the sacrifice, but the fact that what is taking place today is a noble cause.

### **Prime Minister Tony Blair**

**Q.** Mr. President, to focus it back on Mr. Blair and Britain, here is a guy who has lost two Ministers, who has lost a large part of the Parliamentary party, and who—it could be said, polls—has lost the faith of a large part of the country over Iraq. He's still, as you saw the other night in the Lord Mayor's banquet speech, 100 million percent there, and this against the great tide of popular opinion. What have you got on him? What's the relationship? And what's the——

**The President.** Well, that's just Tony——

**Q.** And what's the payoff? [*Laughter*]

**The President.** Freedom and peace. Tony Blair is making decisions for the right reasons. He is a—in my relationship with him, he is the least political person I've dealt with. And I say that out of respect. He makes decisions based upon what he thinks is right.

He's plenty independent. If he thinks—if he thought the policy that we have both worked on was wrong, he'd tell me. He believes it's in his country's interest that we work for a free and peaceful Iraq. He, as much as any world leader, saw the consequences of September the 11th, 2001. Obviously, there are more—those consequences and that moment has directly affected my foreign policy. See, it changed the nature of the Presidency. It changed the security arrangements of the United States of America. I vowed to the American people I would never forget the lessons of September the 11th, 2001, and that is we are no longer protected by oceans. We're vulnerable to attack by terrorists.

Tony Blair understands the devastation that terror can bring to a country in a civilized world. He knows the tactics of the terrorists are to create fear and chaos. He knows what they want is for the civilized world to retreat so that their tyranny and their bloodshed and their unbelievable barbaric form of government, like the Taliban, will take hold. And he refuses to allow his country to be terrorized, and he refuses to allow peoples to become subjugated to that kind of ideologies. And I respect him greatly for that.

And I admire him as a strong leader. He tells you what he thinks, and he does what he says he's going to do. And that's about as high a compliment as I can pay a fellow leader.

### **President's Popularity/Decisionmaking**

**Q.** Mr. President, you're going to find, I think, quite a large number of people on the streets demonstrating during your visit for a variety of reasons, which highlights a rather striking contrast between—you're still a pretty popular President at home, but you're not a very popular President in various states around the world.

**The President.** Yes.

**Q.** Does that—how do you account for the lack of popularity around the world? And does it matter to you?

**The President.** Well, first of all, I—it's kind of—all I can tell you is I went to the Philippines. There was thousands and thousands and thousands of people out there, and they were waving with all five fingers. [*Laughter*]

No, look, I frankly haven't paid that much attention to what you just described. But first, I admire a country which welcomes people to express their opinion. I'm proud of Great Britain's tradition of free speech. I remember going to Hyde Park and seeing Speaker's Corner—what do they call it, Speaker's Corner?

**Q.** Yes.

**The President.** People up there expressing their opinion. And it's kind of—it's a longstanding tradition. People speak their mind.

**Q.** Mr. President——

**The President.** Let me finish here.

**Q.** Sure.

**The President.** And I fully understand not everybody is going to agree with the decisions I've made. I don't expect everybody to agree. And I make decisions based upon—in the foreign policy arena, made decisions based upon a couple of principles. One, how best to secure America? That's my biggest responsibility. See, I was there right after September the 11th. I saw the smoke. I saw the devastation. I heard the grief. I hugged the firefighters whose—the families of the firefighters who rushed in to save. I saw the heroism. And I vowed right then and there that I would use everything in my power to prevent America from being attacked again.

But there's a greater ambition as well, because I understand that free societies are societies which do not breed terror. And I gave a speech the other day, and in that speech I said there are certain folks who I think don't believe that freedom can take hold in parts of our world. And I reminded them about some of the statements about the post-World War II Japan, that there were some skeptics who said that, well, Japan couldn't possibly be a free society or a democratic society.

I thought about that when I was eating dinner with Koizumi, Prime Minister Koizumi—he's a good friend—thinking about what would happen if we had not done a good job with the peace after World War II. Would America and Japan be able to work together, for example, on the North Korean issue, had it not been done right?

My point to you is that free societies and democratic societies are transforming societies. And we have a chance to transform by working together, transform in a positive way whole societies and whole regions of the world.

And finally—and people don't—I can understand people not liking war, if that's what they're there to protest. I don't like war. War is the last choice a President should make, not the first. And it was the last choice, after endless years of diplomacy took place—resolution after resolution after resolution after resolution that was put forth in the U.N. condemning the—and warning the world, frankly, of the dangers of Saddam Hussein and condemning his programs and insisting that he disarm. And finally, in 1141, as you know, by unanimous vote, the world said—at least

the U.N. Security Council said, “Disarm or there will be serious consequences.”

And he didn't disarm. He had no intention of disarming. And so then the fundamental question came down to a couple of things, one, the definition of serious consequence. Serious consequence is not another resolution or another debate inside the U.N. And I understand people loathe war. So do I. And yet, we are war. That's what September the 11th taught us. It's a different kind of war. And I intend to, so long as I'm the President, wage that war vigorously to protect the American people.

And there's all kinds of ways to wage it. And the best way to win, in the long run, though, is the spread of freedom. And that's what's happening. But sure, I can understand people not agreeing with the decision I made.

**Q.** But it is striking, isn't it, that opinion poll after opinion poll——

**The President.** I don't know. I don't read them.

**Q.** ——huge solidarity after 9/11——

**The President.** I just don't pay attention to the polls. If I were trying to be President paying attention on the polls, I'd be running around in circles. It's a great—that's one of the reasons I've got Winston Churchill's bust here is, at least from my reading of the history, he pretty much said what he thought, did what he thought was right, and led. He was courageous in his leadership.

And you know the interesting thing about Presidents and Prime Ministers is you're never going to be around to judge history, judge the true merit of the history, of the decisions you make. Short-term history is—it's hard to call it unobjective. It's very subjective, I guess, is the best way to put it. After all, the person who has written the history hasn't had a chance to see the full effects of the decisionmaking.

And in my case, most of the short-term historians probably aren't that thrilled with me being President in the first place, which might color the short-term history. [*Laughter*] But my only point is, I think a President must not try to write the legacy of every moment. The President just does what he thinks is right and try to explain as clearly as I can—part of the purpose of my visit to your great

country is to use the opportunities I've had to speak directly, like I'm doing right now, to people about why I made the decisions I made.

Go ahead, go ahead.

### **Iraq**

**Q.** On Iraq, you mentioned you're having intensive consultations these days——

**The President.** Constantly.

**Q.** Yes.

**The President.** With Blair, by the way.

**Q.** Indeed.

**The President.** Weekly.

**Q.** Seeming to point to the need to hand over—or a desire to hand over power faster to the Iraqis? Where is this going?

**The President.** Yes. Well, we—Jerry Bremer is here in town today. I think he just had a press availability. And we discussed all options and just to make sure we understand where we are relative to the situation on the ground.

We want the Iraqis to understand that we believe they're plenty capable of running their own country. See, we're of the school of thought, this administration—and Tony is the same way, if I could put words in his mouth—that believe the Iraqi people are plenty capable of running a peaceful country.

And therefore, the sooner the people—the more the people realize that, I think the more comfortable they'll be with their future. And the sooner that sovereignty is handed over in a way commensurate with a—with a stable country, the better off it is. That's been our position all along. So we're constantly reviewing the progress.

There's been—obviously, it's tough. We lost Italian police today. These killers are—they're hardnosed people. They'll kill because they want to intimidate. They want us to leave. That's their goal.

They've got different ambitions. Some would like to see a Taliban-type government, that would be the mujahideen-type people. Some want to revenge the loss—the defeat in Afghanistan. They would be your Al-Qaida-types. And the Ba'athists, of course, want to get back in power. They represent roughly 18 percent of the people, and they've had 100 percent of the power, and they like that. And obviously, in a free society, that's

not going to be the case, power sharing as opposed to not power sharing.

And so there are elements of the Ba'athists and Saddam holdouts that are desperately trying—and I use the word “desperate” because they see the progress being made. And there is progress being made. And I certainly don't want to underestimate the security situation. I know how tough it is. I know how tough it is firsthand.

And yet, on the humanitarian side, in 7 months we've got a new currency moving through the system, which is pretty remarkable when you think about it. The oil revenues, which belong to the Iraqi people, are now up to 2.1 million barrels. Prior to going in, I think if you were to review some of the writings and speculation, they would have said, “Well, that's what's going to take place if the oil reserves are destroyed. How is the coalition going to handle that?”

You might remember there was talk about sectarian violence, that all we would do is create a vacuum and longstanding bitterness and hatred would take hold, and Shi'ites and Sunnis and Kurds would all be after each other. That hasn't happened.

Electricity is up to prewar levels, although it has dipped this month because of maintenance. My only point to you is that these killers are beginning to see a society begin to emerge, a peaceful society, which is a major defeat for terror. And you bet we're consulting on a regular basis to determine how best to deal with the tactics on the ground. The enemy is changing tactics, and we'll change tactics with them.

But I do—I talk to Tony a lot. He's got good wisdom on this subject. Our intelligence services are very close. Our militaries are talking to each other. You've got this—Government officials there amongst the CPA, and our relationship is good there. And it's very important for us to continue to discuss these issues closely. And then, of course, I stay in touch with Bremer. And—sorry.

**Q.** Well——

**The President.** Are you trying to dominate? You're doing a fine job. [*Laughter*] No, go ahead.

**Q.** No, go——

**The President.** We'll make it around. I promise you. I'll wait. Nice try. I call down

to these characters all the time for hogging the mike, as we say. He's one of the worst of them.

### **Blair/Bush Relationship**

**Q.** Regarding the nature of the pressure that Prime Minister Blair is under, is that putting pressure on the decisionmaking, your own relationship—

**The President.** Not as far as I can tell.

**Q.** Or pressure for change or change of tactic or anything?

**The President.** Never once has he said to me, ever, "Gosh, I'm feeling terrible pressure." Our discussions go as you would hope leaders of two allies would go: What can we do to help each other? What can we do to succeed? I have never heard him complain about the polls or wring his hands. I'm telling you, the relationship is a very good relationship because I admire him, and I admire somebody who stands tough. And I admire somebody who has got a vision which is a vision that is peaceful, and somebody who shares that same deep feeling that freedom is an incredibly important part of changing the world. Free societies do not attack each other. And Tony Blair doesn't hold an elitist view that says only certain people should be free or can be free or capable of freedom. And I admire that in him.

And so to answer your question, you say he's—look, it may be hard for you to believe, and these guys will tell you, I—and ladies will tell you, excuse me, guys and ladies—that my style of leadership is to lay out an agenda based upon principle and lead. And I don't pay that much attention to what is written about me or polls. And I think they will verify that what I've just told you is true. And it's not to say I don't respect the press. I do respect the press. But sometimes it's hard to be an optimistic leader. A leader must project an optimistic view. It's hard to be optimistic if you read a bunch of stuff about yourself, if you know what I mean.

I don't know how much time Tony looks at polls or anything. I'm just telling you from my perspective, my relationship, he is the kind of person with whom I like to consult, a person I'm proud to call friend, because he's willing to make the tough decision and

stand by it. And he makes a tough decision based upon what he thinks is right.

### **Flexibility in Foreign Policy**

**Q.** Mr. President, we've heard—or heard from the administration emanating the phrase, "No war in '04."

**The President.** Who said that?

**Q.** Behind the scenes.

**The President.** Oh, yes. Is that you, Lindlaw [Scott Lindlaw, Associated Press]? [Laughter]

**Q.** Well, there you go. It's now in the lexicon.

**The President.** We're at war. We are at war, see? I don't mean to anticipate your question, but I'm just going to tell you, we're at war now. We're at war with terror. But go ahead.

**Q.** My point is—

**The President.** And Iraq is just one of the—is a front in the war on terror.

**Q.** That's where I'm going. I'm going to Syria, and I'm going to Iran. These are countries which, by the criteria of Iraq, you could argue, have the same application.

**The President.** Not really, because remember, the—first of all, not every situation needs to be resolved through military action, and I would cite you North Korea and Iran. Secondly, the case in Iraq was unique, is unique, because the world, for over a decade, had spoken. The diplomatic route was tried. No one can argue with that. We tried, I think it was 12 resolutions, if I'm not mistaken, culminating in 1441 which said, "Disarm, or you face serious consequences." I remember going to the U.N. to give that speech. And basically I was looking forward to giving that speech because I wanted the U.N. to understand that they are a vital institution, but their vitality depended upon their willingness to have some meaning to their words.

And we're at war. Okay? The war on terror goes on. And the war on terror is going to take a while. America is vulnerable to attack. So is your country, by the way. And the only way to win this war is to do everything you can to protect your homeland but to stay on the offensive, which is what we're going to do.

And having said that, not every situation requires a military response. As a matter of



fact, I would hope very few situations would require a military response. Let me talk about Iran. The Iranians must hear from a unified world that it is unacceptable for them to develop a nuclear weapon. And I want to thank—I thanked Tony the other day on our videoconference we had, for he and his Foreign Minister Straw and the French Foreign Minister and the German Foreign Minister, delivering a message on behalf of all of us that a nuclear weapon is unacceptable. The IAEA, an international organization, as you know, based out of the United Nations, is now very much involved in this issue. The United States position is, is that we appreciate their focus, and we expect there to be a transparent regime inside of Iran. They admitted they had—were enriching, that they hadn't disclosed their enrichment under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. They had made that admission, which says that we need to be on guard.

My point to you in regards to your question on war is that there is a way to deal with this issue in an international forum, which we are now doing. There's bilateral pressure; there's trilateral pressure; and there is multilateral pressure, I guess is the best way to put it. And that's the best way to deal with it.

Let me talk about North Korea, if you don't mind, right quick, to show you, at least, how I think on foreign policy issues. North Korea is a—had a bilateral relation with the United States, and the leader would insist that the United States come to the table and provide different aid, and he, the leader, would not—"he," Kim Chong-il, would not develop a nuclear weapon. And so our country agreed to that. It turns out he was developing highly enriched uranium suitable for a nuclear weapon. The thought of Kim Chong-il having a nuclear weapon is very dangerous and/or the capacity to export a nuclear weapon into the hands of terrorists.

By the way, terrorist networks who are willing to kill with car bombs are also willing to kill on a massive scale. The idea of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of terrorist organizations is a dangerous, dangerous thought for the 21st century. And we've got to deal with it.

So I looked at the history and realized that the bilateral relations with Kim Chong-il hadn't worked. There's a real politic here, when somebody says they're going to do something and they don't do it. That should be a warning signal, and it was. So I went and worked with the Chinese and convinced the Chinese through a variety of means of argument that they need to be involved, and they now are involved. They're hosting these talks. So you've got the Chinese, and you've got the Americans, and of course, South Korea and Japan and now Russia are all involved. So you've got five countries saying the same message to Kim Chong-il: We expect you not to develop a nuclear weapons program.

And my point to you is, is that there are ways to rally constituencies and nations toward a common objective, which is precisely what we're doing. That is exactly what the U.N. tried to do and others tried to do, and the U.N., as far as Iraq went. It's just at the end, some countries decided that serious consequences meant something other than—something different than what I thought serious consequences meant, I guess is the best way to put it.

### **Steel Tariffs**

**Q.** Can I ask a question about trade?

**The President.** Please, yes. Let me guess.  
[Laughter]

**Q.** You had a ruling on Monday—

**The President.** We did.

**Q.** —which was not favorable to the U.S. decision last year. Are you going to lift the tax?

**The President.** Well, let me kind of review the bidding right quick on this issue. The International Trade Commission ruled that imports were harming the industry. Therefore, I felt obligated to take a look at that ruling and make a decision based upon that ruling, which as you know, I did. And we're now in the process of looking at a lot of things. One, of course, is whether or not the respite given helped the industry to restructure and to the extent at which it did restructure.

Somebody went off.

**Q.** Not me.

**The President.** I would hate for this profundity to be lost. [Laughter] To answer—a very short answer—I am listening, looking, and we'll decide at an appropriate time. I haven't made up my mind yet.

### ***Iraq and Afghanistan/Democracy in the Middle East***

**Q.** Just one last question on Iraq and Afghanistan.

**The President.** Sure.

**Q.** Is it really—it's inconceivable that you could consider pulling out—

**The President.** It is inconceivable.

**Q.** However, bin Laden is at large, and Saddam Hussein. How close are you to finding these people?

**The President.** No, first of all, I wouldn't—I think that your—let me answer your question this way. We will find them. Okay? Yes, we're not pulling out until the job is done. Period.

**Q.** And that includes finding those two?

**The President.** Yes, that's part of it. But even bigger is a free and democratic society. That is the mission. And again, I'd repeat—I know I'm sounding like a broken record to you. I just want you to get a sense for how strongly I feel for the mission we are on.

I gave a speech the other—I think I might have—or mentioned it to you. I gave a speech about democracy in the Middle East. I believe a—first of all, I believe that the Middle Eastern countries are plenty capable of being democratic countries. Their democracy won't be Western. We don't expect them to look like America. We expect the governments to be modern, however, and that includes, well, women's rights and including women into the future of their societies.

So the mission in Iraq is a free and peaceful and stable country. It will be a—this is a transforming mission. It is a milestone, as I said it, a milestone in the history of liberty. And Tony Blair understands that. He looks—and I would hope—what they would say this of me: I look beyond the signs and the moment to be able to see out, out in years, out in history.

It's an exciting time to be leaders of our two countries. It is exciting in the sense that,

working together, we can transform society in a positive way. And I say, "working together," I mean with everybody. There's some unbelievable devastation besides terror going on in the world. And I look forward to reminding the British people that our country proudly is leading the world when it comes to the battle of AIDS. I put forth an initiative of \$15 billion, \$10 billion new money on top of \$5 billion we're already spending over a 5-year period of time, to help get antiretroviral drugs into the hands of the healers and helpers that are in these ravished countries. Can you imagine living in a world—we are living in a world, you don't need to imagine it, it's happening—in a world in which the pandemic of AIDS is wiping out an entire generation on a continent? And we must do something about it. And it's sad, and yet, we have an opportunity to lead.

And I look forward to talking to my good friend about how we can work together. And it's not only the United States working with Britain; it's the United States working with Europe, whole, free, and at peace—whole, free, and at peace. Today I was able to present the Medal of Freedom, which is the highest civil award that I give, to Lord George Robertson. I don't know if you all were in there and saw it or not. Were you there?

**Q.** On TV.

**The President.** Yes, I'm sorry. Well, you know, security risk. [Laughter]

Anyway, it was a—but the reason I bring that up is that during my tenure here as President, we worked with George and Tony Blair and other countries to expand NATO and the most significant expansion ever, except for the initial thrust. And we expanded to the Baltics. And by the way, we not only expanded to the Baltics, but at the same—in the same period of time, got rid of the ABM Treaty, which I felt codified hatred and distrust.

And yet, relations are good. And we're moving forward. NATO is an incredibly important institution, and NATO is an instrument for freedom.

Yes, one last.

**Q.** One last question. Can I ask a question about European defense?

**The President.** Yes. Anyway, what I was going to say is, is that the relations with Europe are vital and important. We've got good relations. Obviously, there was some disgruntlement about the decision made on Iraq, but I would remind you that Germany has troops in Afghanistan supporting that mission there, for which we're very grateful. And they're doing a darn good job.

Yes, last question. Yes, okay, last two questions, then I've got to go. I'm heading toward television. I'm trying to beam my way into Great Britain.

**Q.** David Frost will wait. [Laughter]

**The President.** That's easy for you to say. He gets to ask the questions, not you. Go ahead. [Laughter]

#### **European Defense Force**

**Q.** There was a fuss from American officials after Tony Blair met with Jacques Chirac and Gerhard Schroeder in Berlin and appeared to take forward the European initiative on defense. I wanted to ask you what your administration was worried about—whether you could trust Tony Blair to keep the thing—Atlantic alliance—

**The President.** Let me make sure you understand our position. What we believe, that Europe needs to take more of a defense posture and should act independently of NATO if NATO chooses not to take on the mission. We also believe that the European Defense Force—we agree with Tony Blair that it should not undermine the vitality of the NATO mission. And I trust Tony Blair to make the right decision there.

I don't know what chirping you're hearing about it, but at least in the President's chair, I'm confident that when he says—this is the man, remember, he has told me things and has stuck to his word. And therefore, I say with confidence that when he says to me that NATO is a vital relationship and the European Defense Force will not undermine NATO's capacities and/or ability to move when it needs to move, I believe him.

Last question.

#### **President's Upcoming Visit to the United Kingdom**

**Q.** Yes, if I may, I gather your program includes a visit to the northeast of England—

**The President.** It does.

**Q.** —which is Jordyland. And I was wondering how your Jordy was, and how you might all understand each other?

**The President.** My Jordy is probably just about as bad as my English. [Laughter] And I hope they understand Texan. You know what I'm saying?

**Q.** Yes, exactly.

**The President.** We may be talking above each other. I can't wait to go to his constituency. It's going to be—it will be good to get out into the countryside. I like—it's hard for a President to get out to the countryside. I travel in somewhat of a bubble.

**Q.** You'll need your phrase book.

**The President.** What?

**Q.** You'll need your phrase book while you're out there.

**The President.** Yes. They'll need theirs too, I'm afraid. [Laughter] But I'm looking forward to it. This is going to be an historic trip, and it's going to be one that will be in my memory for a long time. I'm really looking forward to it.

I appreciate you all giving me a chance to visit with you. Thanks for coming by.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 2:08 p.m. on November 12 in the Oval Office at the White House. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 12 but was embargoed for release until 12 noon, November 14. In his remarks, the President referred to Joseph I. O'Neill III, managing partner, O'Neill Properties, Ltd.; Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom; Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi of Japan; former President Saddam Hussein of Iraq; L. Paul Bremer III, Presidential Envoy to Iraq; Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Jack Straw of the United Kingdom; Minister of Foreign Affairs Dominique de Villepin of France; Minister of Foreign Affairs Joschka Fischer of Germany; Chairman Kim Chong-il of North Korea; and Secretary General Lord Robertson of NATO. Journalists referred to Lord Mayor Robert Finch of London, United Kingdom;

Usama bin Laden, leader of the Al Qaida terrorist organization; television journalist Sir David Frost of the BBC; President Jacques Chirac of France; and Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany. Participants in the interview were: Andrew Gowers, Financial Times; Martin Newland, Daily Telegraph; and Paul Potts, Press Association. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

### **Remarks on Signing the National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week Proclamation**

*November 14, 2003*

Thank you all for coming. Thanks for the warm welcome. Welcome to the people's house.

In a few moments, I will sign a proclamation in honor of employers across America who have shown their support for our National Guardsmen and reservists. In times of need, our Nation counts on the guard and reserve members to fulfill their commitments of service. We value their courage, and we honor their sacrifice. They are defending their Nation in the war on terror, and they're serving in a just cause.

Our guardsmen and reservists depend on the understanding of their employers. Across America, where units have been activated, employers at offices and factories and schools, hospitals, and other workplaces have been understanding and really supportive. They've given priority to the needs of our Nation. Employers have shown great consideration for their workers who have been called to duty and great support for the Nation's defense. These companies have the gratitude of our Nation. They have the gratitude of the Commander in Chief.

I appreciate members of my team who are here today. Secretary Elaine Chao of the Department of Labor and Secretary Tony Principi of the Department of Veterans Affairs, thank you both for coming. I appreciate Deputy Secretary Paul Wolfowitz at the Department of Defense for being here as well. Under Secretary David Chu; thank you for coming, David. I appreciate Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee for being here. I see that General Pete Pace is here, Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I ap-

preciate Assistant Secretary Thomas Hall, Assistant Secretary for Reserve Affairs, for coming; thank you, sir. I appreciate David Janes, the Acting National Chairman of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve group. Thank you for coming.

Most of all, I thank you all for being here, particularly those who wear our Nation's uniform.

American citizen soldiers have served in every conflict since the Revolutionary War. Some of the most legendary names in American military history are associated with Guard and Reserve units. The famed "Key-stone Division," as the Pennsylvania National Guard was long known, once marched under the command of Omar Bradley. The "Rainbow Division," which drew soldiers from Guard units in 26 States and from the District of Columbia, was led in World War I by a young brigadier general named Douglas MacArthur. In 1905, 21-year-old Harry S Truman joined the Missouri National Guard. Our 33d President learned much from his experiences in the Guard, and so did the 43d President.

But most of all, I remember the high caliber of the people with whom I served. Today, more than 1.2 million men and women serve in the Guard and the Reserve. That's almost half of America's total military strength. These men and women face the difficult challenge of balancing military duty with civilian employment. They know that the call to active duty can come at any time.

And they're always ready. Guardsmen and reservists are now serving around the world, in places like Afghanistan and in Iraq. They serve here at home as well, in the war on terror. They're meeting the terrorist enemy abroad so our fellow citizens do not have to face the enemy at home.

They are part of our efforts to employ targeted and decisive force against coldblooded terrorist killers. They're helping to train and equip Iraqis and Afghans to defend their own nations. They're helping the Iraqi and Afghan people build just and free and democratic governments. They're helping to defend the American homeland.

Our guardsmen and reservists are showing great skill and courage, and America honors their unselfish dedication to duty. Our

guardsmen and reservists rely on the support and patience of their families, their wives and husbands and daughters and sons who must bear the prolonged absence of a loved one. They rely on their civilian employers to put the national interest above the corporate or self interests. Employers of guard and reserve members make possible the contributions of our citizen soldiers. By supporting the mobilization of patriots, employers are demonstrating their own patriotism.

With us today are representatives of companies that have given outstanding support to the Guard and to the Reserve. Central Atlantic Toyota Distribution Center, D.H. Griffin Wrecking Company, Miller Brewing, Pacific Gas and Electric Corporation, Tyson Foods are all winners of this year's Secretary of Defense Employers Support Freedom Award.

These companies do all their utmost to support and encourage service in America's National Guard and Reserve. They provide pay, health care benefits, and job security to the men and women who are called to active duty. They recognize that their workers are fighting to keep America free.

Other companies are making equally important contributions. Albertson's, Clear Channel Airports, Home Depot, and Verizon all provide outstanding support to their employees during mobilizations. All of us appreciate the generosity and the public spirit shown by these outstanding companies and many others like them around our country.

Members of the guard and reserve are with us today. We're proud of your service. We thank you for your sacrifice. The war on terror has drawn on many of America's strengths, and one of the greatest strengths is the citizen-soldier, like Specialist James Dexter of the Illinois National Guard. At home, Specialist Dexter is a volunteer firefighter. In Iraq, he is serving as a military police officer. On three separate occasions in a single month, Specialist Dexter rushed to the scene of traffic accidents, twice saving the lives of American soldiers and Iraqi citizens and once putting out a dangerous fire. He was awarded the Bronze Star. He has earned the gratitude of our country for his service.

America needs the Guard and Reserves more today than we have had in decades. We're at war. Yet we're fortunate that so many of our citizens have heeded the call to serve a cause greater than themselves. And we are fortunate that our Guard and Reserve units have received such support from America's business community. As a sign of America's gratitude, I'm pleased to invite representatives from the nine companies here today to join me in signing a proclamation designating National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week.

May God bless you all, and may God continue to bless our great country.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:16 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rear Adm. David Janes, USN (Ret.), National Chair, National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of these remarks.

### **Proclamation 7736—National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week, 2003**

*November 14, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### **A Proclamation**

From before the American Revolution, to the Civil War, to the wars in Vietnam and the Persian Gulf, our National Guard and Reserve have served our country with distinction. Today, our National Guard and Reserve forces are active on every front in the War on Terror. During National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week, we honor our courageous citizen-soldiers and their employers, whose continued support is vital to the success of our Armed Forces and to the strength of our country.

America's Guard and Reserve personnel are training hard and deploying frequently to meet new challenges worldwide. These brave defenders have performed combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. They have provided security at Guantanamo Bay. They have prepared for homeland security missions. Our Nation is blessed and grateful for

the service of the brave men and women of the National Guard and Reserve.

By supporting our Guardsmen and Reservists, employers across our Nation also are helping to advance freedom and democracy around the world. At the same time, these employers benefit from the experience and leadership skills these citizen-soldiers bring home. Employer support of our Guard and Reserve in the United States and abroad helps ensure our troops are mission-ready and is a source of pride and assurance for all Americans. This country is grateful to employers and workers for their support of Guard and Reserve members and their families. Because military deployment often disrupts families and businesses, my Administration is working to make deployments more predictable. Together, our National Guard and Reserve forces and their employers are united in purpose and reflect the highest standards of professionalism and honor.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 16 through November 22, 2003, as National Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Week. I encourage all Americans to join me in expressing our heartfelt thanks to the members of our National Guard and Reserve and their civilian employers for their extraordinary sacrifices on behalf of our Nation. I also call on State and local officials, private organizations, businesses, and all military commanders to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 18, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 19.

## **Statement on Senate Action To Block Up-or-Down Votes on Judicial Nominations**

*November 14, 2003*

Today's partisan action to block up-or-down votes on Justice Priscilla Owen, Judge Carolyn Kuhl, and Justice Janice Rogers Brown is inconsistent with the Senate's constitutional responsibility and is just plain wrong. Once again, a partisan minority of Senators has thwarted the will of the majority and stood in the way of voting on superb judicial nominees.

These obstructionist tactics are shameful, unfair, and have become all too common. At a time when the American people have important issues backlogged in the courts, partisan Senators are playing politics with the judicial process at the expense of timely justice for the American people.

I commend Senate Republicans, especially Leader Frist, Chairman Hatch, and Senator Santorum, for their leadership and commitment to the Constitution and basic fairness. During their 40-hour debate, these Senators have focused on the damaging vacancies that exist on the Federal courts of appeals, the highly qualified individuals I have nominated to serve, and the Senate's obligation to vote on every judicial nominee.

No matter who is President or which party controls the Senate, the American people deserve a well-functioning, independent judiciary and a commitment by all Senators to live up to their constitutional obligation.

## **Proclamation 7734—America Recycles Day, 2003**

*November 14, 2003*

*By the President of the United States of America*

### **A Proclamation**

To preserve America's majestic beauty, we must conserve our natural resources and practice responsible stewardship. On America Recycles Day, we reaffirm our commitment to conservation and recognize the increase in recycling in the last two decades.

Twenty-five years ago, only one community in the United States had a curbside recycling program. Today, more than 9,000 communities have curbside collection, and many others provide drop-off centers or cooperative collection facilities. Businesses and communities are boosting recycling collection efforts, and companies are using new technologies and methods to manufacture products more efficiently. Manufacturers, retailers, and governmental and non-governmental organizations are engaging in voluntary product stewardship partnerships to reduce waste. Industries are also discovering ways to reduce waste and cost, cut pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, and conserve energy and water.

Many of the products used every day, including aluminum cans, appliances, office paper, cardboard boxes, furniture, and clothing contain recycled materials. We also recycle motor oil, tires, plastic, glass, batteries, and building materials, and we are developing new ways to recycle electronic products—the fastest growing portion of America's municipal waste.

On America Recycles Day, I encourage individuals, businesses, communities, tribes, and government to continue to work together as good stewards of America's resources. By using our resources wisely, we help build a stronger economy and a healthier future.

**Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush,** President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 15, 2003, as America Recycles Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate programs and activities.

**In Witness Whereof,** I have hereunto set my hand this fourteenth day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-eighth.

**George W. Bush**

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 17, 2003]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on November 18.

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## **Digest of Other White House Announcements**

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The following list includes the President's public schedule and other items of general interest announced by the Office of the Press Secretary and not included elsewhere in this issue.

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### **November 8**

In the morning, at Camp David, MD, the President had an intelligence briefing.

### **November 9**

In the afternoon, the President returned to Washington, DC.

### **November 10**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Little Rock, AR, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Dr. Michael Quick.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Greer, SC, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Robin Longino and high school athlete Ben Comen. Later, he traveled to Greenville, SC.

In the evening, the President returned to Washington, DC.

The White House announced that the President will award the Medal of Freedom to NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson in a ceremony at the White House on November 12.

The President announced his intention to appoint Patrick Marshall Hughes to be Assistant Secretary for Information Analysis at the Department of Homeland Security.

### **November 11**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, in an Oval Office ceremony, he signed the Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003.

Later in the morning, the President and Mrs. Bush traveled to Arlington, VA, where they participated in a Veterans Day wreath-laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns in Arlington National Cemetery. In the afternoon, they returned to Washington, DC.

Later in the afternoon, in an Oval Office ceremony, the President signed the National Cemetery Expansion Act.

#### **November 12**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing followed by a National Security Council meeting. He then met with Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and Presidential Envoy to Iraq L. Paul Bremer III. Later, in the Oval Office, he participated in a photo opportunity with Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Michael O. Leavitt and members of Mr. Leavitt's family.

Later in the morning, the President met with NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson.

In the afternoon, the President participated in an interview with British print journalists and a separate interview later with Sir David Frost of the BBC. Later, in the Oval Office, he and Mrs. Bush participated in the presentation of the National Medal of Arts awards.

#### **November 13**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he traveled to Orlando, FL. While en route aboard Air Force One, he had a telephone conversation with Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi of Italy to express his condolences to the families of the Italians killed in the suicide bombing in Nasiriyah, Iraq, on November 12 and to discuss reconstruction efforts in Iraq and Europe-U.S. relations. Upon arrival in Orlando, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Matilda Walther.

In the afternoon, the President traveled to Fort Myers, FL, where, upon arrival, he greeted USA Freedom Corps volunteer Mark Asperilla.

In the evening, the President attended a Bush-Cheney reception at a private residence. Later, he returned to Washington, DC.

The President announced his intention to nominate Rhonda Newman Keenum to be an Assistant Secretary of Commerce and Director General of the U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service.

The President announced his intention to nominate David Campbell Mulford to be Ambassador to India.

#### **November 14**

In the morning, the President had an intelligence briefing. Later, he participated in an interview with Trevor Kavanagh of the British newspaper *The Sun*. Then, in the Oval Office, he and Mrs. Bush participated in the presentation of the National Humanities Medal awards.

In the afternoon, in the Residence, the President had lunch with President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi of Italy. Later, he traveled to Camp David, MD.

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### **Nominations Submitted to the Senate**

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The following list does not include promotions of members of the Uniformed Services, nominations to the Service Academies, or nominations of Foreign Service officers.

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#### **Submitted November 14**

David C. Mulford,  
of Illinois, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to India.

Diane S. Sykes,  
of Wisconsin, to be U.S. Circuit Judge for the Seventh Circuit, vice John L. Coffey, retiring.

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### **Checklist of White House Press Releases**

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The following list contains releases of the Office of the Press Secretary that are neither printed as items nor covered by entries in the Digest of Other White House Announcements.

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#### **Released November 10**

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan



Statement by the Press Secretary: President Bush To Award Medal of Freedom to NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.R. 2691

### ***Released November 11***

Transcript of an interview of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice by KXAS-TV, Dallas, TX, on November 10

Transcript of an interview of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice by KING-TV, Seattle, WA, on November 10

Transcript of an interview of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice by KHOU-TV, Houston, TX, on November 10

Statement by the Press Secretary announcing that the President signed H.J. Res. 52, H.R. 1516, H.R. 3365, S. 470, S. 926, H.R. 1610, H.R. 1882, H.R. 1883, H.R. 2075, H.R. 2254, H.R. 2309, H.R. 2328, H.R. 2396, H.R. 2452, H.R. 2533, H.R. 2746, and H.R. 3011

Fact sheet: In Support of America's Veterans

### ***Released November 12***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Announcement of the National Medal of Arts recipients

Citation for the Presidential Medal of Freedom presentation ceremony for NATO Secretary General Lord Robertson

### ***Released November 13***

Transcript of a press gaggle by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Transcript of a press briefing by National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice on the President's upcoming visit to the United Kingdom

Fact sheet: President Calls on Congress To "Finish the Job"—Pass a Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit for Seniors

### ***Released November 14***

Transcript of a press briefing by Press Secretary Scott McClellan

Transcript of an interview of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice by WAGA-TV, Atlanta, GA, on November 10

Transcript of an interview of National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice by WTVT-TV, Tampa, FL, on November 10

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## **Acts Approved by the President**

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### ***Approved November 10***

H.R. 2691 / Public Law 108-108  
Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2004

### ***Approved November 11***

H.R. 1516 / Public Law 108-109  
National Cemetery Expansion Act of 2003

H.R. 1610 / Public Law 108-110  
To redesignate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 120 East Ritchie Avenue in Marceline, Missouri, as the "Walt Disney Post Office Building"

H.R. 1882 / Public Law 108-111  
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 440 South Orange Blossom Trail in Orlando, Florida, as the "Arthur 'Pappy' Kennedy Post Office"

H.R. 2075 / Public Law 108-112  
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1905 West Blue Heron Boulevard in West Palm Beach, Florida, as the "Judge Edward Rodgers Post Office Building"

H.R. 2254 / Public Law 108-113  
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1101 Colorado Street in Boulder City, Nevada, as the "Bruce Woodbury Post Office Building"

H.R. 2309 / Public Law 108-114  
To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2300 Redondo Avenue in Long Beach, California, as the "Stephen Horn Post Office Building"

H.R. 2328 / Public Law 108–115

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 2001 East Willard Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as the “Robert A. Borski Post Office Building”

H.R. 2396 / Public Law 108–116

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1210 Highland Avenue in Duarte, California, as the “Francisco A. Martinez Flores Post Office”

H.R. 2452 / Public Law 108–117

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 339 Hicksville Road in Bethpage, New York, as the “Brian C. Hickey Post Office Building”

H.R. 2533 / Public Law 108–118

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 10701 Abercorn Street in Savannah, Georgia, as the “J.C. Lewis, Jr. Post Office Building”

H.R. 2746 / Public Law 108–119

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 141 Weston Street in Hartford, Connecticut, as the “Barbara B. Kennelly Post Office Building”

H.R. 3011 / Public Law 108–120

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 135 East Olive Avenue in Burbank, California, as the “Bob Hope Post Office Building”

H.R. 3365 / Public Law 108–121

Military Family Tax Relief Act of 2003

H.J. Res. 52 / Public Law 108–122

Recognizing the Dr. Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution in Baltimore, Maryland, as the official national museum of dentistry in the United States

S. 926 / Public Law 108–123

To amend section 5379 of title 5, United States Code, to increase the annual and aggregate limits on student loan repayments by Federal agencies

H.R. 1883 / Public Law 108–124

To designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1601–1 Main Street in Jacksonville, Florida, as the “Eddie Mae Steward Post Office”

S.470 / Public Law 108–125

To extend the authority for the construction of a memorial to Martin Luther King, Jr.